BING

THE
INTERNATIONAL
CROSBY CIRCLE

CHRISTMAS
1982

Edited by REG BRISTO

NO 66

the singer we grew up with.

Crosby at the Movies

Protruding ears or no protruding ears, Bing was destined to become one of the all-time box office champions of Hollywood.

Learn to Croon *(from "College Humor")*
Put It There, Pal *(with Bob Hope, from "Road to Utopia")*
Sunshine Cake *(from "Riding High")*
The Bells of St. Mary's *(from "The Bells of St. Mary's")*
You Don't Have to Know the Language *(with The Andrews Sisters, from "Road to Rio")*
You Lucky People You *(from "Road to Zanzibar")*
You Keep Coming Back Like a Song *(from "Blue Skies")*
But Beautiful *(from "Road to Rio")*
Let's Take the Long Way Home *(from "Here Come the WAVES")*
It's Always You *(from "Road to Zanzibar")*
Life Is So Peculiar *(from "Mr. Music")*

South Sea Islands Bing

Songs of the isles were a staple in Bing's repertoire. They could sweep you away to paradise.

Beyond the Reef *(with The Lynn Murray Chorus)*
Song of the Islands
Mele Kalikimaka *(with The Andrews Sisters)*
Harbor Lights
The Hawaiian Wedding Song *(with Kainapau)*
Aloha Kuu Ipo Aloha

Bing Swings Again

His career was steeped in jazz, especially Dixieland. And jazz musicians were among his closest friends.

I'm Gonna Sit Right Down and Write Myself a Letter *(with Bob Scobey's Frisco Jazz Band)*
After You've Gone *(with Eddie Condon and His Orchestra)*
Mack the Knife *(with Bob Scobey's Frisco Jazz Band)*
Tea for Two *(with Connee Boswell and Bob Crosby's Bobcats)*
Exactly Like You *(with Bob Scobey's Frisco Jazz Band)*

Fancy Meeting Bing Here

Listen to Bing going places in song. You'll enjoy the trip.

The Poor People of Paris *(with Rosemary Clooney)*
Sentimental Gentleman from Georgia
Ciao, Ciao Bambina *(with Rosemary Clooney)*
Chicago *(with Buddy Cole and His Trio)*
The Missouri Waltz
Fancy Meeting You Here! *(with Rosemary Clooney)*

Shamrocks, Shillelaghs and O'Crosby

Irish songs, as only Bing could sing them.

When Irish Eyes Are Smiling
How Are Things in Glocca Morra?
It's the Same Old Shillelagh
The Daughter of Molly Malone *(with Rosemary Clooney)*
Who Threw the Overalls in Mrs. Murphy's Chowder?
I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen

BING

YULETIDES OF YORE

In London in 1976 to record yet another album, make television appearances and perform at the London Palladium, Bing Crosby told writer Douglas Keay that his "powers of recall had atrophied with age". But, leaning back in a settee, his hands clasped behind his head, his ankles crossed, he stared at the ceiling and - prompted by a few memory - stirring questions - began to take himself back to a wonderland of Christmases past, the Christmases of his childhood more than 60 years ago. "Just listening to Bing talk," said Douglas, "gave the feeling of being curled up in front of a log fire, gazing at the flames as they licked around the wood...."

Bing's memories concluded: ".....the same old decorations come out year after year. Not, I fear, the same ones we used when I was a child all those years ago in Spokane - I wonder whatever happened to that tarnished old star that always went on top of the tree ? - but ones that the children have made themselves.

"On Christmas Day the whole family gathers at our house in San Francisco. Sometimes, with all the children, grandchildren, aunties and uncles, we have a party of over 60. Right up until the end Mother, who lived to 93, used to come. She'd hand out presents - always something practical - and tell me I shouldn't make movies with Frank Sinatra (she couldn't discount those stories about the Mafia.)

"Just occasionally we'd stand by the window, Mother and I, and look out on the lush lawns of Beverly Hills - still green - and we'd agree: Christmas with the family was marvellous anywhere. But when you came down to it, we did miss the snow, the white Christmases we used to know....."

Is there a clue there, one wonders, to the phenomenal success of the song WHITE CHRISTMAS? Bing invariably invested his songs with sincerity, one of his most endearing traits. Did some of the above thoughts enter his mind when he sang that famous Christmas song of Irving Berlin? We hope Bing enjoyed those Christmases - he enriched so many - for so many.

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Organ of THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE:
Secretary/Editor: REG BRISTO, 7 Greenmeadow Close, Cwmbran, GWENT, NP44 4PJ

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LESLIE GAYLOR, 114 Medina Avenue, Newport, Isle of Wight.

BING dedicated to the memory of a great man and entertainer beyond compare.

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plus TRACK EVENTS (new records), Members Letters &c.

The various 'reproduced' items are from the excellent brochure by American Readers Digest for the boxed-set BING SINGS AGAIN. They sum things up well!

E D I T O R I A L

A TIME TO BE JOLLY sang Bing, among so many happy Yuletide sentiments. He also sang: "and in despair I bowed my head - there is no peace on earth I said...

Is it going to need really special efforts to have a jolly time this year? Unemployment, terrorism, bombings, hi-jackings, kidnappings, war itself - plus the idea being steadily insinuated that a "limited nuclear war" is possible. Will they even, this year, ease up for the two days themselves? We can only pray so. It has also been sung - "isn't it a pity Christmas comes only once a year?" That doesn't encompass the wild scrabble round the shops (now in full swing so that the Easter eggs can make their appearance) - and to get the final bottles of bath-salts, the ties, blouses, socks that may never be worn - or wanted! It means, of course, that quite unique spirit of goodwill that is somehow conjured up for Christmas. We think that is what Bing wanted when he made his usual Christmas wish: A HAPPY, PEACEFUL AND BLESSED CHRISTMAS TO YOU ALL. We like to think so.

Despite the prevailing gloom, then, we hope - the Editor and all contributors to BING - that you do indeed have a Happy Christmas and the best possible 1983. We know that all members will sincerely reciprocate with - AND YOU, TOO!

MAY YOUR DAYS BE MERRY AND BRIGHT.....

A Happy Christmas
and a
Prosperous New Year
to all

Kay Bisgard

christmas
magic
IS
BING

THE GOLD OF THE DAY
AT LEEDS

It cannot be claimed that the blue of the night followed - for to tell the truth, we didn't notice, - but certainly a brilliantly golden day greeted the travellers to Leeds on Sunday, October 3rd last for the 17th consecutive annual get-together. Over seventy again foregathered from near and far. That is literally true for while just a few merely travelled across Leeds to Rounday Park to attend the event at the Mansion House there at least one had travelled over 6000 miles to be present; another had come across from the Continent.

One no doubt facetious suggestion was made that we could hold a cricket match - the over-60's vs. the under 30's. That would have had nothing at all to do with Crosbyana but it would have illustrated the prevailing weather conditions. The sun shone warmly from a cloudless blue sky with not a stir of wind to send the reddening leaves cascading from the trees. Truly a day stolen from summer - all the more remarkable because the day preceding and the day after were dark, dismal, wet days. So, fortune decreed the perfect setting and must have made the trip to Leeds that much more enjoyable. There was no sign of the dreaded fog of early October either at dispersal time.

> This year, in addition to the new format of less rigid time-keeping and complete informality, the event was made more notable because of special guests. Normally we feel it invidious to mention individuals for a member is a member and we're delighted to meet them all. Having said that, however, we feel some exceptions may be made. Firstly, it was a delight to welcome PRISCILLA KOERNIG from California, accompanied by her good friend from Hanwell, London, and in-Britain travelling companion, RENEE CHESTER. Priscilla's name is well known to many of our members on account of her close association with Bing occasioned by the great work she has done for many years in the cause of Crosbyana in America. She turned out to be a charming, gracious and highly socialable lady who was obviously very much at home in the company of kindred spirits who spoke, possibly in accents markedly different from the caressing tones of the Californian dialect!

It is quite certain that this was the first occasion we have had the pleasure of a member from across the Atlantic at our event.

Secondly, the member who travelled across from Holland - INEKE HOMMES. Reference to the previous issue of BING will show that your Editor was labouring under the delusion that Ineke Hommes was a man! If I hadn't long passed the susceptibility to a red face I would certainly have had one at Leeds for Ineke turned out to be an attractive, blonde, young lady of 18 years! And how well Ineke fitted into the gathering, too!

Thirdly, we feel constrained to again mention our Nottingham member BARRY WHITTINGHAM who, in the devoted care of his mother, Charlotte, again attended. Barry you will recall met with a horrendous accident a year last February when he fell 30ft through a roof on to concrete. Barry was told by doctors that he would not walk again. Its a little

early, no doubt, to say the doctors were wrong but Barry, having transferred from a car to his wheel-chair got out of it and somehow pulled himself up the two flights of the balustraded (and handsome) staircase. If some hearts were in mouths at his grim effort surely his wasn't. Barry said that next year he will walk INTO the Mansion Hotel and take the stairs in his stride. With his courage and determination we fully expect he will.

MICHAEL CRAMPTON, host and organiser, opened the proceedings in his usual fashion to the strains of Bing singing WHERE THE BLUE OF THE NIGHT. Sadly he asked, as one of his first duties, all to stand in memory of three members who had passed away during the year:

STAN JESSOP, of Leeds.
ROY DODDS, of Chesterfield.
DENIS (Dixie) LEE, of Halstead in Essex.

Yours truly then had the opportunity of reporting somewhat inconsequentially on matters Crosbyana, thankful to talk on such a topic as Bing and the Circle and not having to dwell on the state of the national economy. It was also a delight to officially welcome our guests-of-honour above named, all of whom received warm acclaim. Priscilla spoke briefly but with undoubted sincerity of her pleasure at being in Britain and amidst such obvious Crosby people.

And that was the end of the 'formalities'; thence onwards music and conversation prevailed. True there were films - that fine montage of Bing's career lasting about 20 minutes. We have realised the comparative futility of putting on a full-length film. Enjoyable as that may be it savagely cuts into the scheduled time-scale. And naturally a Mack Sennett or two had to be enjoyed, especially the ever-popular WHERE THE BLUE OF THE NIGHT and the less well-known I SURRENDER, DEAR.

> These films never fail to excite. For the younger members it is intriguing to see the way, virtually, it all started more than 50 years ago. For the older members they vividly recapture the atmosphere of the period. All enjoy the rich, vibrant, baritone voice as well as the jaunty, yet never cocky, drollery of Bing's dialogue.

He described the way these films were made - at a time when he was 'banned' from the Coconut Grove and elsewhere, how there was no script and not a lot of cash! A short conference with no precise direction and the 'shorts' were made in less than a day! They were used to fill-in on the really bumper cinema shows we used to see in those days. One could see the big film, the second film, a cartoon or two, a newsreel, a 'short' such as we're discussing -- and an organ recital. For around sixpence in the 'old' money, or 2½p in today's currency!

There was the ever-amusing quiz, too, consisting of part oral and part sound questions. A certain amount of levity inevitably arises when members offer their answers without deigning to write them down! And arguments ensue while quizmaster Michael patiently waits! Prizes, too, of LP records and books....some just don't care.

Other diversions included the opportunity to purchase Crosby records; Mike Slipman of LEGEND MUSIC was there with a fair selection of the more elusive albums while, sadly, the collections of deceased members were on offer - in the case of the late Stan Jessop his widow had said all proceeds would go to Cancer Research.

Various books and badges were also available; this is an aspect we would like to develop so that there might be a kind of Crosby Emporium whereby our TRADING POST could become a 'live' reality.

> The meal turned out to be a mixture of being served and 'self-service'! Wholesome and appetising - we've allowed several weeks to pass and have had no adverse comment. The bar was opened quite early and while the effect may have been to further relax inhibitions there was not the slightest sign of anyone imbibing too freely!

Altogether a very happy occasion and thanks are due to Michael Crampton for his organising efforts and to all who attended and thus played their invaluable part. For myself it was a delight to meet so many members again 'in the flesh' as it were and to put faces to those friendly letters I am constantly receiving.

A postscript or two might round things off in good fashion. Firstly, LEN HUUTER who journeyed up from Walsall, wrote:

> May I, on behalf of my wife and myself, express our sincere thanks and gratitude to Michael for the really super time we had at the Mansion House Leeds. What a pleasure it was to meet and converse with Priscilla Koernig from the USA and our young friend from Holland, Ineke Hommes. The 250mile return journey was rewarded by a most interesting and enjoyable time.

And from PRISCILLA herself (we hope she finally gets copies of the scores of photographs that were taken during the event!) :

> Thank you very much for making my visit to England so special by welcoming me so warmly at your annual meeting in Leeds. I felt like a celebrity! I especially enjoyed meeting so many Bing people and certainly Michael and yourself. I hope you and other members may sometime come to the States and attend one of our annual meetings.
>
> Most sincerely,
> PRISCILLA.

Which sentiments fairly sum up the general feelings. MICHAEL CRAMPTON thus made his massive annual contribution to Crosbyana by organising the event in such efficient style.

And it would be less than courteous if we didn't record that the films came thro' the kindness of our publishing benefactor, JOHN JOYCE.

For all those who wonder WHY LEEDS? - we have told the story many times. And for those who despair of reaching that West Yorkshire town, and still in the social-events department, on the next page you will see an enterprising, if not downright BOLD, proposal for consideration.

SOMETHING WORTH CELEBRATING AND HERE'S THE OPPORTUNITY

EIGHTY YEARS ON

1903 1983

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION BY JOHN MARSHALL

With Christmas breathing down the back of our necks, this may seem an unlikely time for a discourse on Spring; yet there is no time quite like the present for doing something we feel ought to be done. You know, of course, that May 3rd, 1983 will be the eightieth anniversary of Bing's birth; the popular media won't be going out on any limbs. Thus, I have the notion of a MAY Bing Crosby event in London - on May 7th to be precise. Why London? Why NOT? In view of Mike Crampton's yearly get-together in Leeds in October and the chances of there being a May shindig in various parts of the world, why not indeed?

> IT IS A SATURDAY FOR ONE THING SO THERE'S NO CALL TO MISS MONDAY AT WORK. IN MY VIEW, SATURDAY HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE LOGICAL DAY TO BE KICKING UP YOUR HEELS, LEAVING SUNDAY FREE FOR TRAVELLING HOME OR SEE THE SIGHTS, MAYBE EVEN WALK IN THE PARK - AND GET MUGGED.

Whatever plans may be keenly visualised, IT ALL DEPENDS ON YOU! Apathy may be liable to stalk Crosby territory and has cast its shadow on many a similar notion, but this one, at least, has enough historical value and significance to warrant a proper celebration.

Basically, the intention is to allow those many who have never made the journey to Leeds a chance to sit up and howl a little without the strenuous trip North, the expenses thereby incurred and the general downward drooping of spirits around October. Spring has the additional prospect of being an optimistic period, the weather should be perking up and overall the natural order of things is geared for a decent, not too expensive night in the metropolis during which you will be dined and wined and entertained in the best available Crosby mood. Its a night you can bring the wife to and be certain she will have a new view on her pet peeve, the one that has so frequently had her packing and ready to go home to mother. Its a night for meeting people, exchanging views and artifacts and - best of all - marking a worthwhile anniversary with a splash of colour and music.

BUT! IT DOES DEPEND ON YOU! The programme will begin at 5pm when you are met at the door, personally welcomed aboard and slung straight into the throng. If you intend coming along and sitting in a corner, playing gooseberry - stay away from our door! We'll have stalls and presentations of Bing things at prices you can afford and covering all areas of your collection. WE KNOW WHAT RIPPED-OFF MEANS AND IT WON'T BE WELCOMED HERE.

(Cont. over

By 7.15 you'll be squaring up to a first-rate dinner with all the trimmings and for your further enjoyment, listening to Crosby classics from a real live band. Around 8.30 you can sit back and relax, watching the cabaret and a thorough trip through the catalogue in the company of names you are familiar with - Bing people. Surprises, too, that we would rather you discover for yourself. From then on until such times as you wish to wend your way home, or to a local hotel, you can carry on the conversations, get mildly plastered - or dance the final part of the evening away.

IT MUST BE REPEATED, HOWEVER: IT ALL DEPENDS ON YOU! You can appreciate that in a period when money doesn't grow on trees such an enterprise as outlined must be based on that old human failing, FAITH. We are not talking about twenty or thirty fans gathered on top of some pub, but something a little more ambitious -- SOMETHING THAT PAYS BING AND HIS MEMORY THE RESPECT WE ALL FEEL IS DUE. We want it to LOOK, right, SOUND right and have the various aspects of a night to remember.

AND THAT IS WHERE YOU COME IN. Saying Yes you'll come, and then at the final moment deciding the budgie is too sick to be left.... that's what leads to an empty hall - and disaster. You will appreciate, too, that time is valuable when bookings are concerned and the year is about to open up. WE WANT THE VENUE SMACK IN THE MIDDLE OF TOWN where inconvenience is a bad word and almost anyone can get there minus hassle. THAT CAN ONLY BE DONE IF YOU ARE WILLING TO THINK THIS IDEA OVER AND RESPOND BEFORE CHRISTMAS WITH A FIRM COMMITMENT. If we don't do that the sole means of celebrating this notable anniversary on a worthwhile scale vanishes. YOU KNOW ITS WORTH DOING AND DOING RIGHT. YOU CAN HELP IT HAPPEN.

The price will be down to earth and can only be based on response. Take away the cost of travelling long distances, add a proper night's entertainment and good food and you have an old-fashioned Saturday night on your hands. Don't worry, you won't have to negotiate a second mortgage - and there is no prospect of someone making a personal fortune from it. YOU'LL SEE WHERE THE MONEY WENT, RIGHT IN FRONT OF YOUR EYES. WE ALREADY HAVE MANY INTERESTED LETTERS -

BUT WE DO NEED YOU! Write to:
JOHN MARSHALL,
39 Kings Road,
TEDDINGTON, Midd'x.
TW11 0QD

Before December 25th if humanly possible and let us try and show that UK fans still have a lot going for them. Enclose a SAE for fuller details, as they happen.

Editor: It may be unnecessary to add that the above is reproduced almost as written by John. It is an imaginative - and certainly courageous - idea and, we suggest, merits your interest and, further, your attendance. WRITE TO JOHN ONLY AND NOT TO THE EDITOR
As John says, speed is of the essence for the weeks fly by - and a tremendous amount of work will have to be done.

Whether John's inspiration comes to fruition depends entirely, as he also says, ON YOU!

This is entirely John Marshall's project. We are more than happy, however, to give publicity and whatever other help John may ultimately require.

SURPRISE -

HAPPY HOLIDAY

"Chestnuts roasting on an open fire,
Jack Frost nipping at your nose...."

by
The Editor

Yes indeed - add holly, mistletoe, Christmas pudding, gift-wrapped packages - and Bing singing SILENT NIGHT and you have the traditional idea of Christmas. Yet the truth is, as we know when we stop to think about it, perhaps half the world enjoys Christmas in a temperature upwards of 80°, blues skies - and on a sandy beach! Many of us made this discovery during the years 1939-46. This year, for example, our Test cricketers will experience such a Yuletide along with all the other Aussies.

I remember such a Christmas many years ago. News of my appointment overseas came in September and I was delighted. Christmas in a warmer clime, altogether apart from the duty-free spirits to go with it! And a further bonus, in the more free-and-easy atmosphere of an overseas establishment. No, not bad. A good prospect. So, I got ready, all packed up for a flight - and waited. And waited.

Enquiries about my flight brought the reply "Not to worry - there's a big air-lift going on but you'll be there as soon as possible..." The air-lift was an entirely different story but to cut a longish story short, I finally got my passage - two days before Christmas!

I was proceeding alone in the first instance with the family to join me later. Clearly, whatever the weather, I was in for a lonely Christmas, and didn't particularly relish the prospect. Arriving at a certain place on the Mediterranean two days before Christmas was going to give me no time at all to adjust. Ah well, couldn't be helped; all in the course of duty.

I had a drink with the chap who had met me at the airport but I was conscious that he was in a hurry to get back to the party he had so obviously left to greet me. And it was good of him, too, for he was under no obligation. So he drank up quickly and said brightly he would see me at the establishment next day....

The hotel didn't do much to cheer me up either. A largish, fairly bare, room - and a bedstead of iron with brass knobs. Ye Gods! Much too late to change - even if that had been possible and that was most doubtful anyway. I'd had a long day, however, messing around at airports &c. and was fit to sleep on the axiomatic clothes-line. But was it hot! It certainly was. I'd left Gatwick in a sleety drizzle, well-wrapped up against our usual December weather. Here, even at 10 o'c at night it was sweltering, running to form.

Next morning my spirits revived as I walked thro' the white-stone sunny town, happy to feel the sun on my back, noting the cheerful shops, in shirt-sleeves and slacks. Christmas Eve, forsooth! The plant was almost deserted though I did meet again the chap who had met me the night before. We ran thro' the current works programme but with almost everyone on Christmas leave, I was soon back in the sunny town. Well, i could at least spend the next two days - Christmas Day and Boxing Day - sunbathing. That couldn't really be bad.

Although the hotel was far from full after dinner that night there was a fair smattering of people sitting around in the lounge. As is the way it wasn't long before I was chatting to a pleasant couple.

"Just arrived?" said the man - who turned out to be in the RAF as a matter of fact. "Yes," I replied, "bad timing, though it wasn't entirely my choosing."

It turned out they weren't resident in the hotel but had popped in for a quiet drink after finishing their Christmas shopping - shops stayed open until midnight out there!

"You won't want to spend Christmas alone here, I'm certain," said my new-found friend, "why not come and spend the day with us? You'd be most welcome. I can understand what its like to land up here on Christmas Eve."

He anticipated my reply, too. "No, you won't be imposing in any way at all. We'll be glad to have you - we've got three children and their friends so it won't be too quiet a time!"

Well, I was most happy to accept. Taking pity on a lonely stranger at Christmas time no doubt but there was no disguising the genuine warmth of their invitation.

Next day, around ten in the morning, he arrived in his car and took me to their place - an attractive bungalow on the outskirts of the town. It was hot, very hot and a far cry from yule-logs, and warming-drinks....cool, long ones, yes!

> Then came the crowning moment. As I was ushered thro' the doors there came, unbelievably, the voice of Bing Crosby singing ADESTE FIDELIS! If there was one thing that was going to make this Christmas different, I had fondly believed, it was the absence of my Crosby records! But - there he was!

Passing thro' the first thing I noticed was a very elegant radiogram (that's what they were in those days!) from which was coming the lovely carol. I stopped in my tracks and marvelled. Then I remarked on the beautiful radiogram - and the quality of its sound.

"Yes," said my host, "I'm a bit of a record fan and I do like to hear them at their best. Do you care for records?"

> I was about to reply in astonished delight when he added: "I must warn you - my repertoire is fairly limited. No, that's not true. There's plenty of variety but the truth is most of my 500 records are of BING CROSBY!"

Further comment, no doubt, is superfluous! I wasn't a member of the Circle in those days but my interest was as its always been since 1931-32.

A surprise Happy Holiday - and, its all perfectly true. We've said it many, many times: Crosby people are NICE people. That was a very early, and very concrete, example of what that phrase means.

It was a lovely Christmas holiday - and those people are my friends to this day.

As a postscript to the above, I spent 3 years in that post and, to my surprise, added to my collection. For example, I first saw - and bought - the alnum HOME ON THE RANGE there.....

VERILY OLD MASTERS

It is a sobering thought - to some of us, perhaps a frightening one! - that the three LPS entitled OLD MASTERS, Vols i, II, and III were issued 20 years ago. They appeared, of course, on the always-lamented Decca Ace of Hearts label with the Nos. AH1, 17, and 24 respectively. This prolific Crosby label was to an extent succeeded by the Coral in the 70's but we have, alas, no comparable source today.

The three albums were issued individually here and the sleeves carried no notes, which is slightly unusual for what was an epic issue. In America, however, they were issued as a set accompanied by a very interesting booklet. Considering it is now twenty years since their appearance and the large number of new collectors (plus the fact that many members are still looking for them!) it seems a good idea to reproduce the notes contained in that booklet, so here they are:

"OLD MASTERS is more than a descriptive phrase in the jargon of the recording industry...

it is a hallmark of distinction.

Like old wines and old friends, old Masters mellow and grow precious with the years.

They remind us of a rewarding yesterday - strike a pleasant note admist the discords of today -

and even hint of a rosier tomorrow.

This album, "OLD MASTERS", is a collection of thirty-six recordings by Bing Crosby, grave and gay, tender and frivolous, and suffused with a nostalgia as compelling as the fugitive airs of a steam calliope on a hot summer night. The title represents a judicious play on words. Crosby is, in fact and in the first place, the Old Master, a singer institutionalised in the full coursing of his career, who has acquired the rich patina of old ivory, the cachet of Gainsborough's Blue Boy, and the comfortable authenticity of a chateaubriand at the Pavilion. In the second place, these are, quite literally, old masters, recordings made by Crosby between August 8, 1934, the day on which he sang his first four songs for Decca Records, and Jan. 4, 1949, and long since discontinued, existing thereafter only as serial numbers in inventories and as thick waxed discs laid carefully away in storage vaults. They were, like thousands of popular recordings, engaging and ephemeral.

They had been bought and played, placed in albums by collectors, given away by others, disposed of for junk, broken and forgotten, or, at any rate, remembered mostly by sentimentalists and private historians. When they no longer sold they were dropped from the Decca catalogue. SOMEDAY SWEETHEART, for example, was recorded on Crosby's first Decca date. It last appeared in the 1942 catalogue.

The decision to issue OLD MASTERS was made on the basis of the pleasing discovery that the number of sentimentalists and private historians (to say nothing of collectors of Crosby, who are not merely sentimental and mindful of history, but more numerous than collectors of anyone else, not excluding Louis Armstrong) far exceeded Decca's expectations. Last year, Decca presented "BING - A MUSICAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY". This was an album of eighty-nine songs selected from the vast Crosby discography of two decades with the company. For a number of reasons, some of them technical, forty-nine of the songs were re-recorded. Time had deteriorated some of the masters and the development of new high-fidelity equipment made it advisable to record the songs once more; many of the original performances, on single 78rpm recordings, ran longer than the producers of the autobiography felt was warranted for a project whose dimensions at the outset were, if not outsize, certainly monumental.

They were wrong. With each copy of "BING", Decca enclosed a post-card on which buyers of the album were asked to say whether they liked it and to make whatever other comments they felt were germane. As was expected, everybody liked "BING". What was completely unexpected was that more than nine-tenths of those who responded wanted to know why the original master recordings had not been used and requested that an album of originals only be issued.

"OLD MASTERS" is the first of them, a labor of love and mechanics. The selection of songs here was predicated on the lasting value of the tune and of the myriad associations it might have for people; it was predicated also, and prosaically, on the condition of the plates. There were many songs among the hundreds in the Crosby repertoire Decca would have liked to use for this album, but the recordings were murmurous or harsh with surface noises, with what are known to sound engineers as ticks, hisses, bats and crackles. These were, for the time being, eliminated. The ingenuity and scientific resources of recording men being what they are, however, there is an excellent chance that these masters may be restored until, as one unstrung Crosby enthusiast put it, "we get to the point where we're issuing surface-noise records with Crosby accompaniments."

How many millions of Crosby's recordings have been sold will never be totted up with any reasonable degree of accuracy. Three of them (WHITE CHRISTMAS, SILENT NIGHT and JINGLE BELLS) were bought by more than 20,000,000 people. Another sixteen sold over a million apiece. In any case, a Crosby man can be understood only in the context of record collectors as a whole. Generally speaking, they may be divided into three categories: classical, hot, and pop. For the purposes of this discussion, the classical and hot types must, for obvious reasons, be disregarded.

Collectors of popular recordings fall into two classifications, vocal and instrumental. Putting aside the instrumental, the vocalists sub-divide into collectors of male popular recordings and female popular recordings. Members of the former break down into followers of current male singers or partisans of those other years. The latter are divided between Crosby and everybody else. Crosby enthusiasts, evidently a contentious lot, are themselves split into three wings. The first will house only old recordings made by the master, on the ground that he is not what he used to be. The second will buy only new Crosby recordings, on the theory, equally unsusceptible of empirical proof, that his voice is greater and more mellow today than in former years. The third collect, or try to collect, everything Crosby ever did, their contention, perhaps more accurate than any of the others, being that the great man's voice and mastery of his art have not changed at all over the years and were unparalleled from the beginning.

The true Crosby eclectic is a man who can identify him singing a song called "OUTSIDE" on a record made in 1928 by Irving Aaronson and his Commanders at a time when Rudy Vallee was the outstanding vocalist of the day. The position in society of such collectors is impossible to isolate: they cut across all lines of caste and class, fields of endeavor and financial condition. Only their emotional climate is the same in all cases: They collect fluffs, records on which the presence of Crosby is in dispute, rejected recordings, unreleased recordings, second or third versions of the same song that were released, say, only in Australia, radio broadcasts and air checks, and V-disks, which were made during the war for the exclusive use of the Armed Forces, the sale or possession of which by civilians was illegal.

One man is known to have acquired them all. Another once paid 50 dollars for the B, or second, version of Crosby singing TEMPTATION. A third parted with 100 dollars for a poor home recording of Crosby singing "ONE ALONE" with Trudy Erwin, a performance taken from a radio broadcast by a fourth collector with strong commercial instincts. A fifth, somewhat weaker than the rest, got married and, when told by his wife, "It's me or the records," sold his collection. Upon hearing the story, a sixth remarked: "The moral is, don't get married." A seventh spent his vacation, two weeks, driving roughly 7000 miles in search ofrare Crosby recordings. He drove north from New York into Canada, west to Vancouver, BC., and returned via the northern part of the United States, visiting every large city en route and a good many small ones, and returned home exhausted but triumphant with several rare items.

There was an eighth Crosby man, so singleminded that he was unable to keep from correcting Crosby on the Crosby discography. He had waited a number of years to be introduced to Crosby and was finally told by an acquaintance in high places that a meeting had been arranged at Decca's offices. The collector, in a state of high excitement, was ushered into the presence and shook hands. After a certain amount of small talk, Crosby asked the man, "What records do you have by Duke Ellington?" The collector stiffened. "I have exactly two records by

Duke Ellington," he said coldly. "The two you did with him - "THREE LITTLE WORDS" and "ST. LOUIS BLUES". "I don't mean that," Crosby went on. "I mean the stuff I did in England with Ellington." "You may have done some stuff in England with Ellington," the collector said with an air of finality, "but not as official recordings that could be released." Crosby coughed a little, but did not commit himself. A Decca executive sent for a photograph of Crosby; Bing autographed it and bade the collector a farewell not untinged with bewilderment.

The natural history of the Crosby fan is always characterised by a fine disregard of external circumstances and a brooding concentration upon the matter in hand. About as good an example as any is the case of a young man who was stricken late in 1944 during his last year in high school and who now claims to be the foremost Crosbyite in the United States with a collection of almost 5000 records. He was exposed to Crosby through the medium of a radio broadcast that was on the air daily from 11.30am to noon. "How the hell I wasn't in school at that hour," he mused not long ago, "I don't know, but I heard pretty near every one of them right up to the time I graduated." The infrequent broadcasts he was unable to hear because of minimum attendance requirements were listened to for him by his mother who then thoughtfully jotted down the names of the songs he had missed. "I'd come home," he said, "and she'd have "LET'S PUT OUT THE LIGHTS", "TEMPTATION", and "MOONSTRUCK". How I died to have missed "MOONSTRUCK". I hung myself. You couldn't talk to me for the rest of the afternoon. I had to be in a French class or a math class during that time, thinking, 'I wonder what he's singing now?'

The young man made a Crosby fan of his father, an indulgent man. One day the latter, in an expansive mood, said to his son, "How'd you like to get everything Bing ever made?" "He didn't know what he was letting himself in for," the son reported recently. It got to the point where he was bringing home so many records that his in-laws, who lived across the hall, began to think he was neglecting his business. He'd come home at night and they'd be sitting there waiting for him. He'd sneak into the bedroom and slide them under the bed and wait for them to go. After a while, the living-room filled up with so many records nobody could tell if anything had been added. It got to look always the same - tremendous. They gave up, of course. My mother used to say, "I've heard of golf widows, but I never before heard of record widows. I am the first record widow in the world." The young man also induced what may or may not have been a profound psychic trauma in his sister. "She thinks my father favors me because of the Crosby thing," he said. "It isn't really true, except he does spend more time with me on account of it. He really does like her just as much, though."

Undoubtedly, Crosby, or the lack of Crosby, provoked what to date has been the most severe crisis in this collector's life. He was scheduled to graduate from high school on a weekday in June, 1945. "The graduation started at 8.30 in the morning," he recalls. "My father and I had it figured out the ceremony would stop about 11 o'clock. The school was a twenty-minute walk from home. The broadcast went on at 11.30. For a week we talked about how we were going to catch Bing that day. It seemed a fine way to end school. We had it all figured out. I know I was worried. My father wanted to know what I was

worried about. "I'll even take you home in a cab, if necessary," he told me. We thought about carrying a portable radio to the exercises, but I suppose there are some limits. So we gave up on that one.

"Now here's the way it was a graduations in that school. The students always lined up on the stage and got their diplomas in the order of how tall they were. I was always first; I was the smallest guy in the class and I thought sure I could make a fast getaway. So there I am sitting up there on the stage. My parents, grandparents, an aunt and an uncle, and my sister are out there in the audience. None of them are Crosby collectors, of course, but my father. It got to be 20 after 11 and I got frantic. I had, you see, no idea of the program - who was going to make speeches, who was going to sing, how many medals and awards they were going to give out. Me, I was lucky; I was going to graduate; I was too busy listening to Bing all those years to find out anything else. Finally, I caught my father's eye and he looked at his watch after I looked at mine. I shrugged, and he shrugged back at me.

"It was like my father was saying 'You had to go and graduate today?' and like I was telling him, 'What could I do about it?' After a moment's reflective pause, the collector added, "I never did find out what Bing sang that day," and then concluded with fine magnanimity, "It didn't actually spoil my graduation. I wouldn't want to go that far." As it happens, the only Crosby collector who acknowledges the merits of any other singer is Crosby. "There are only two fellows I ever wanted to sing like," he has said. "Jolson and Armstrong."

The thirty-six songs in this album have not been arranged in chronological order, either as to release date or date of recording, since the objective was good programming, so to speak, rather than historical sequence. But in all of them may be recognised the elements that have made Crosby the fine, enduring performer he is - the sincerity, the warmth, the ease of delivery, the rhythmic feel that made one critic declare the other day that "He still has the greatest beat of any pop singer in the business." This is inevitable. Crosby grew up in the music business with instrumentalists like the great Bix Beiderbecke. He is a friend of long standing of a good many hot musicians and as often as not gets his kicks with them, as they say in the trade.

"OLD MASTERS" displays a wide range of Crosby. It includes, for example, songs that had no lyrics but for which lyrics were written and which Crosby recorded, like DON'T BE THAT WAY (recorded in 1938), WHAT'S NEW? (1939), and AND THE ANGELS SING (1939). There are three of the incomparable duets he did with Johnny Mercer, the composer and singer, MR. MEADOWLARK (1940), MR. CROSBY & MR. MERCER (1938), which was a take-off on Gallagher & Shean, and ON BEHALF OF THE VISITING FIREMEN (1940)

There are many lovely standards in the album. Numbered among them are MY BUDDY (1940), DEAR OLD GIRL (1936), ITS THE TALK OF THE TOWN (1945), and THESE FOOLISH THINGS

(1944). Included also are several of the songs Crosby recorded thatwere heard first in Hollywood films. Those taken from his own motion pictures can be found in the special Decca Collectors' Series. In "OLD MASTERS" there are WOULD YOU? from 'San Francisco' (1936), 'REMEMBER ME?" from 'Mr. Dodd Takes the Air' (1937), YOU MUST HAVE BEEN A BEAUTIFUL BABY from 'Hard to Get' (1938), MOON OF MANAKOORA from 'Hurrican' (1938), and ON THE AITCHISON, TOPEKA AND SANTA FE from 'The Harvey Girls' (1944). As ever, Crosby is backed up by some distinguished aggregations of musicians, including the orchestras of Jimmy Dorsey, Bob Crosby,, Woody Herman, Eddie Heywood, John Scott Trotter, The Les Paul Trio, and the poetic fingers of Carmen Cavallaro...Here they are.... all of them.

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Clearly there were thinking, caring, people at Decca around 1960 who knew their job and what they were talking about. No doubt they are long gone, either from natural means or sacrificed on the altar of punk. The analysis of the varying forms of Crosby collecting are of interest; perhaps they didn't realise then that there were collectors outside the States who vied with the ones they described! Reading them after this lapse of time it is plain they could not have been issued here as the notes are so American-slanted - understandably, perhaps.

The lady who claimed she was the first record-widow must be very wide of the mark! I've actually known members who spent their HONEYMOON searching for Bing records. And it is clear too that a host of members spend their time trekking around the junk-shops, both locally, and certainly when they visit a new town...in wind and rain...every Saturday. So often they return home tired and dispirited but when a mint copy of, for instance, LET'S SPEND AT EVENING AT HOME suddenly turns up in a musty old shop the joy cannot be measured!

There is much else to interest in these notes: how Decca (in America) invited a postcard response concerning the autobiography set. And "How many millions of Crosby's recordings have been sold will never be totted up with any reasonable degree of accuracy..." Quite, as we've often maintained. Most figures are pure guesses, and invariably on the conservative side. No true Crosby addict will ever accept that it was 1937 before Bing achieved a million-seller, for example.

But of especial interest to all, and discographers in particular, is the reference to the song OUTSIDE of 1928 by Irving Aaronson and his Commanders with Bing singing.....

As for Bing recording with Ellington in Britain, surely Bing made a bad lapse there? In later years Bing often declared that people in Britain knew a lot more about his recordings than he did - Les Gaylor, Bob Roberts, Fred Reynolds, Ralph Harding and many others. Indeed, he wrote forewords for some of our books.

As the three volumes of OLD MASTERS are listed in the BING CROSBY LP-OGRAPHY there seems no need to reproduce them here.

Needless to say, the advent of the micro-groove record revolutionised collecting. It hasn't necessarily stopped those die-hards from exploring the second-hand shops, bazaars, Oxfam shops, markets, however!

THE TRAGEDIES OF

INGRID AND GRACE

Efforts to make this a happy, joyous, Christmas issue must necessarily stand in abeyance while we record the sad passing of two gracious ladies who played significant roles in Bing's film career. Indeed, one of them shared in Bing's last million-selling single record.

Gracious, beautiful and talented ladies whose deaths caused worldwide sadness; and in the case of Princess Grace stunned shock.

INGRID BERGMAN finally lost her fight against the dreaded scourge of cancer after a tremendous film career which was not without its share of controversy. A startling event in her private life caused her horrendous trouble, especially in America from which she was for a time virtually outlawed. That is no concern of these pages however, for we merely wish to comment on her association with Mr. Crosby. It was, of course, in the much-loved film BELLS OF ST. MARY'S. This was a "one only" appearance with Bing and Ingrid appeared by special arrangement with David O Selznick.

She revealed in her recent book that, being a highly successful dramatic actress, some raised their eyebrows when she agreed to accept the part of Sister Benedict opposite, one might say, Bing's resumption of his Father O'Malley role after the huge success of GOING MY WAY - both produced of course by Leo McCarey. And "opposite to Bing" is relevant for the film did inspire some ill-minded people to criticise the film on the grounds that it portrayed a Catholic Father in love with a nun. These criticisms were answered with some integrity. It is well-known that a religious adviser was on hand throughout the production to ensure that theological ethics were not endangered.

> It cannot be denied, nevertheless, that when towards the end of the film Father O'Malley appeared to be dismissing Sister Benedict, it provided a very moving scene when Father O'Malley seemingly on the spur of the moment, called the Sister back and explained the real reason why she was being sent away.

Both Bing and Ingrid subsequently told the hilarious story of how, when that scene was completed, Bing and Ingrid did indulge in a most unpriestlike embrace - to the horror of the religious adviser! The cameras, of course, were not turning.

When asked why she was willing to appear in what were generally regarded as light-hearted films by Bing -- and what she would do while he was singing, she replied: "I will listen!"

Although Ingrid Bergman played many great roles she is going to be remembered mostly for one that was not in the first flight - CASABLANCA. This war-time epic with Humphrey Bogart has assumed the niche of legendary and led to the modern catch-phrase "Play it again, Sam..." tho' actually this expression was not used in the film.

Her performance in BELLS OF ST. MARY'S was truly delightful and illustrated, perhaps that Bing was never out of his depth with the most illustrious actors or actresses.

GRACE KELLY, or, as she finally became, PRINCESS GRACE OF MONACO, played a larger part in the film aspects of Bing's career, appearing in the great film HIGH SOCIETY, and a couple of years earlier, THE COUNTRY GIRL for which role she received the "Oscar" for the best

Actress of 1954. And Bing himself gave a fine dramatic performance for which he was voted best actor for the year by the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures.

Her performance in THE COUNTRY GIRL was as different as could be from the role she played in HIGH SOCIETY of course -- and Grace, much to her own surprise, found she was co-partner in a million-selling record of TRUE LOVE.

Like Ingrid Bergman, Grace Kelly possessed that almost indefinable quality of feminine graciousness in addition to great talent. It has been rumoured - even stated - that Bing virtually became a suitor to Grace as a result of HIGH SOCIETY. All that can be said about that with assurance is that any male would be hard put to it NOT to entertain such feelings towards such a beautiful lady.

She was 'snapped-up' by a real Prince, of course, and how elegantly she fitted into that role. It was no doubt part of her character that, having left the film industry, she never returned to it despite lucrative offers. She truly was a Princess, and having attained royal status, was accorded an impressive State funeral.

> Certainly Bing and Grace Kelly had one thing in common - their Irish ancestry.

These sad events had the effect of featuring Bing prominently in the newspapers and TV news bulletins. And as most members will have seen, HIGH SOCIETY was screened again soon afterwards as a tribute to Princess Grace.

And from all accounts, another of Bing's film leading ladies came close to making a trio of deaths for she was involved in a car-crash around the same time in which she sustained serious injuries. MARY MARTIN, of course, who appeared in BIRTH OF THE BLUES and RHYTHM ON THE RIVER. One surprising facet of this news was that travelling with her, and also badly injured, was Janet Gaynor who appeared in some of the very earliest 'talkies'.

MARY MARTIN was also scheduled for HOLIDAY INN but had to withdraw as she was pregnant. Her child grew up to be the infamous "J.R." (Larry Hagman) of the DALLAS series which mysteriously captivates most of the TV feminine audience. Mary Martin was also seen with a host of Paramount stars, including Bing, in the film STAR-SPANGLED RHYTHM.

We have seen no further news of this accident and are left to hope that Mary has recovered.

Those of us who watched the funeral of Princess Grace on television can hardly fail to have been disturbed, even horrified, at the blatant way the cameras were kept trained on Prince Rainier during the harrowing ceremony. Such tasteless intrusions on overwhelming grief are, perhaps, indicative of modern 'thinking' by so-called 'modern' producers.

We thought it shameful.

DOUBLE DUTCH!

Our younger members continue to delight us. You will be well aware by now of the story of INEKE HOMMES who made a special trip for the Leeds event - and confirmed beyond any possible doubt that she was a young woman and not a man! Another young lady from the Netherlands has written to us:

I enjoyed very much reading BING No. 65. I found it most interesting to read the story by Mr. John Bignell in which he expressed his delight about the fact that there are still young people discovering Mr. Crosby.

Since I am 21-years-old myself I am somewhat amazed when I read that older collectors are apt to be surprised that there are still young people who like Bing.

Well, I don't think this so rare or strange after all. Compared with, let's say fifty years ago, we now know a lot more about music styles and singers. But there isn't really so much changed in those 50 years. There was a man called Bing Crosby then and thanks to his records, films etc. there is still that man now.

And while comparing one "singer" with another it isn't really a difficult job to find out that Bing is just the best of them all.

When I was very young there were the Beatles and that kind of pop group on the radio. And I first heard about Bing when I was about 11 or 12 years old when my mother gave my Dad a Christmas present of THE WHITE CHRISTMAS album; and in that same year the film WHITE CHRISTMAS was also shewn on television.

From that day on I became a Bing-addict for life.

I imagine this sort of thing still happens to young people in the same way it happened so many years ago when one heard Bing sing for the first time. And as long as his records are available this is bound to go on without any doubt because Bing is timeless - as is so much of good quality entertainment. Thanks to Bing and clubs like the ICC and their members we, the younger ones, also get the opportunity to build up a big Crosby collection as so many others have done during their life.

So you see, there's a bright future ahead for new Bing fans.

I would like it very much to correspond with other members in the Netherlands and elsewhere. So could you please put my name and address in the next issue of BING. That would be very nice. I hope you're having a nice autumn with not too much rain and bad weather! It looks like I'm gonna need my umbrella a lot this week.

Best Wishes,

ETTY GITTS,

Address: Izegemstraat 60, 4826 BG BREDA, HOLLAND.

Editor: Its a pleasure indeed to include your name, address, and letter Etty. I'm sure you will get some response.

These youngg ladies of Holland are a tonic; note she would like correspondents "elsewhere". And Etty's mention of the Beatles is opportune for there was a graphic illustration only recently of the pressures and brain-washing to which young people are subjected these days in the mighty pop 'industry' - for that's what it is.

> Just recently I happened to hear one of those pseudo-friendly chaps on the radio - in someone else's house for I don't listen overmuch to it these days - and he was saying "....I played one of the Beatles old numbers over last night. Really smashing...I do think its a great shame these great numbers get forgotten or overlooked....I'm gonna play one in a minute and you see what I mean.....really great stuff!" And he did play one, then another...
>
> A few days later I noticed that W.H.SMITH's, Woolworths, Boots and several other shops had colossal piles of a new Beatles 'vintage' reissue. Not only that, newspapers carried advertisements announcing this new album.
>
> It is difficult, if not impossible, to believe that this was not all carefully planned and orchestrated; a massive brain-washing campaign to persuade young people (and others possibly) that they were hopelessly "not with it" if they didn't buy this album.

All right, I know. We're just plain envious that no-one says things like that about the neglected and beautiful songs of Bing Crosby. Must be useful to be able to rope in the BBC, the shops, and the record industry in the cause!

On the subject of younger members, you will recall 14-year-old CLIFFORD BARTHOLOMEW of 245 Yorkland Avenue, Welling, Kent, DA16 2LH who told us in the last issue of his discovery of Bing without any impetus at all from his parents. Clifford now writes:

> I have had several people write to me and send me tapes. There was one man from Dublin who sent me a lovely tape but put no name and address except that his name was Michael. Would you please thank him, and all the others who wrote, for me. I certainly appreciated the letters.

Editor: Gladly young Cliff.... these young people will certainly carry the baton of memory thro' the years.

BING ON THE BOX *****

With the unexpected re-showing of HIGH SOCIETY thro' tragic events, members must have been really delighted (with videos at the ready) when unannounced BBC-2 TV screened on successive Sundays in October HERE COME THE WAVES and RHYTHM ON THE RIVER. The first, of course, was a War-time recruiting picture (!) with mammoth patriotic emphasis but, nevertheless, good fun. Perhaps I only perk up when Bing sings but I found the plot a little difficult with Betty Hutton playing the two roles. In fact, I always get as confused as Bing seemed to be! But - splendid songs - especially I PROMISE YOU. And the "take-off" of Sinatra doing that OLD BLACK MAGIC highly evocative!

RHYTHM ON THE RIVER failed to get maximum mileage out of that fine song, ONLY FOREVER. It had a fair story line but Bing didn't sing nearly enough - as I well remember. So much more could have been done with the excellent WHEN THE MOON COMES OVER MADISON SQUARE. Anyway, it showed the TV people are alive to Bing's films!

And Frank Bough, the well-known BBC-TV presenter, in saying Farewell to his long career with GRANDSTAND, showed that clip of Bing in the sports studio - talking about his lucky wager with Uncle Bing!

"YOU CAME A LONG WAY FROM SAN MATEO....."

Priscilla Koernig did! San Mateo is, of course, in the sunshine state of California, USA. She was met by our member RENEE CHESTER of Hanwell, London. The flight from the States must have been the most restful prelude to a very exhaustive tour of British Crosbyana. Just reading about it makes us tired, even breathless - and it would perhaps be helpful if you had a map of Britain by your side as your read it! Renee struck up a great friendship with Priscilla (and others) when she went to America in May last year for the Gonzaga unveiling and was determined to make Priscilla's stay as interesting and comprehensive as possible. Did she succeed? Well - read on!

> RENEE CHESTER wrote this while in hospital - and you may be inclined to say "I'm not surprised!" But no, she entered hospital for a long-standing reason involving a bone operation and it was pure coincidence it followed this amazing round-Britain tour.

RENEE WRITES:

September 19 - it meant us getting up at 5am for Priscilla was arriving at Gatwick at 7.30am and its at least 1½hrs from our place. She arrived dead on time and we were back in Hanwell around 10am. The family took to Priscilla immediately (as did everyone else who subsequently met her) - and I must remark on a lovely circumstance. We kicked off with a roast-beef and Yorkshire pudding (London style!) dinner with the etceteras - and Priscilla couldn't get over the Yorkshire pud! We had to write out the recipe there and then and it is now back in San Mateo with her.

> The first afternoon was, on reflection, one of the quiet times; it was spent in unpacking and chatting. In the course of this, however, Priscilla handed me a large box and said to open it carefully. This I did - and I don't think I've had a lovelier present! It was the Bing record of NOW IS THE HOUR mounted on mahogany. At the bottom, underneath the record, is a silver circle with a picture of Bing sealed in. BUT THE BIG SURPRISE WAS THIS HAS BEEN MADE INTO A WALL-CLOCK! The words BING and CROSBY (top and bottom) are in gold. It makes a beautiful piece of work - and tho' it may be irrelevant in view of the sheer handsomeness of it all - it keeps perfect time! A more original piece of Crosbyana cannot be imagined.

Priscilla had brought the items she had obtained for me at the auction - Bing's check-golf cap, so well-known, and one of his silk dress-shirts. Later on in the course of our travels many people had their photograph taken wearing this golf-cap!

On Monday, the 20th, we were off to town. I had made the preliminary arrangements so that we were invited to meet the manager of the London Palladium where fresh photographs were taken of the plaque which adorns the foyer of that famous theatre and naturally, our American visitor was thrilled to visit the place where Bing had scored such a tremendous success in his final years. We had a great time at the Palladium following which we visisted the various record stores in Oxford St. and Soho to the extent that Priscilla picked up no less

than 23 Crosby albums not obtainable in the States as well as a lovely big poster advertising HIGH TIME in gorgeous colour. There was just time for a meal when I gave Priscilla another surprise. She had expressed a wish to see a musical show - so back to the Palladium to see Michael Crawcord in BARNHAM. We again saw the manager and he presented our friend with a fine picture of Bing.

The next day was spent sight-seeing in town and more mundane things like super-market shopping - Priscilla was keen to see our supermarkets! But the big event was to the Maida Vale studios of the BCC; I had managed to get this visit arranged a couple of months earlier. We had lunch with the BBC staff and Priscilla took pictures of the plaque there in honour of Bing's visit - and where, of course, he did his final broadcast with Alan Dell. We had a most interesting conducted tour.

The following day - Wednesday - we met Alan Fisher, now butler to Prince Charles and, of course, formerly Bing's butler. Again, I had been fortunate enough to make this possible in advance and we had a really lovely time with Alan whose talk of Bing was quite fascinating to both of us.

> And that day we were supposed to have started what might be called our tour-proper. Unfortunately, industrial action was taking place and buses and trains were non-runners. Happily, my daughter Sandra came to the rescue when she saw how downcast we were and took us to Brighton in her car. This we much appreciated; Sandra left us around 9pm after we'd booked into a hotel. It was too late that day to go the Conference Centre, alas.

After visiting member Harry Nolan and his family at Bexhill-on-Sea the next day, we returned to Brighton where I had informed the management of the Conference Centre of Priscilla's visit and they went out of their way to be most welcoming and cordial. Mr. Cullen, the manager had arranged for the press to be present which led, of course, to local newspaper reports of our visit. They seemed - that is, the various officers of the Centre - most impressed with Priscilla. Mr. Tony Hewson, director of the Centre and Councillor Dudley Baker were also present - and said they would be delighted if we joined them for lunch.

Again, our visitor was visibly impressed with the Centre where Bing gave his very last concert and spent a lot of time taking photographs of the place and especially of the commemorative plaque installed there marking Bing's last appearance. We certainly received VIP treatment. Again we were conducted around this huge centre - and we were even taken on stage to the spot where Bing stood. We saw his dressing-room - in fact, it was a suite where Bing could and did we learned, lie down and rest. There was also a shower-room and a small lounge complete with TV. All very luxurious and Bing must have had a comfortable time there, brief tho' it was.

From Brighton, late in the afternoon, we proceeded to Portsmouth and caught the ferry to the Isle of Wight where we were met by Leslie Gaylor. It was a dreadful day, rain pouring down, but there was sunshine on dear old Leslie's face when I introduced him to Priscilla. Thence we visited his home and his now celebrated Crosby Room. If I said it left us speechless you wouldn't believe me but it's the effect his wonderful array of Bing memorabilia has. While on the island we met Margaret and Steve Billington, ICC members who are close neighbours to Leslie - well, they live actually in Cowes where very comfortably we stayed the night.

Next morning we were able to spend some time on the beach before returning to Portsmouth - from where we took a train to Newport in

Gwent, Wales. We arrived there with the rain pouring down again and I feel we thereby incurred an opportunity to take our place in the Guinness Book of Records! We looked for a hotel, didn't care for what we saw on the taxi-driver's recommendation - so decided to leave Newport immediately for Liverpool. We spent 7 hours travelling to Newport - and left it within 20 minutes!

(Editor: Which was very sad indeed. Few people who have visited Gwent will deny that it is certainly among the loveliest counties of the British Isles - and I'm not Welsh! True, Newport is as dispiriting as any town in heavy rain (very prevalent) and the station is in an unfortunate position thanks to recent complicated rebuilding and one-way systems. Added to which, the most salubrious hotels, motels, and guest-houses are on the outskirts of Newport! From Newport northwards, which is really the only way to go, one runs through countryside of almost unbelievable beauty to Abergavenny, Monmouth, Chepstow and other celebrated beauty spots. Advance notice (and we appreciate the difficulty in such a complicated itinerary!) would have added considerably to the tour's attractions!)

We got to Liverpool, exhausted, at 11.30pm and wearily booked into a hotel. Next day we left for Blackpool - and it turned out a beautiful day! We took reels of film of the illuminations and bought many souvenirs but the day had no real connection with Crosbyana!

The following day we entrained again, this time for Gleneagles - and again, this visit had been arranged in advance to enable Priscilla to see the famous golf-course and the hotel at which Bing stayed so often. Again, it rained all the time which was most disappointing but the procedure of photographing interesting items came into play. The manager was most co-operative. Thence to travelled southwards again - to Edinburgh...with our cases getting heavier and heavier with every stop!

Newcastle was the next scheduled stop; arriving there we telephoned John Joyce as arranged - who was most annoyed to find we had booked into a hotel! I would advise any potential visitors to the Joyce's household who are on a diet to think again! The hospitality was out of this world. Not only that, John first of all took us on a sight-seeing tour of the area which included a look-around his book-binding factory. Apart from the splendid meals at John's home, with of course his wife, Rita, we saw all John's Crosbyana and video, it seemed, unlimited. A most enjoyable, even thrilling visit and we are indebted to John and Rita.

We left Gateshead/Newcastle for the beautiful city of York where we spent a couple of lovely days just looking around and enjoying this fine city. In fact, we stayed over an extra day for this purpose before again taking train - for Darlington. This was to meet and stay with two particular pen-friends of Priscilla's, namely Keith and Betty MacDonald, also ICC members. Again, a wonderful couple of days, interesting and enjoyable, with a good ration of Bing listening! And the inevitable shopping. And here I gained two new, good, friends.

This took us up to Sunday, 3rd October - and Leeds! We went straight to the Mansion Hotel tho' it was around mid-day. Happily Reg Bristo and Michael

Crampton were there making preliminary arrangements for the 3 o'c start of the tribute and immediately came down to warmly greet Priscilla and the rest of us. She afterwards confided how very charming they were! In fact, she was absolutely enthralled by it all. You have read elsewhere of the lovely day it turned out to be with warm, autumn sunshine. Here, of course, at the function proper Priscilla was able to meet so many other members, including the sweet young lady from Holland - Ineke Hommes. Without deliberate effort both Ineke and Priscilla were treated as guests-of-honour.

It was, as Priscilla said, a wonderful tribute to Bing and his memory. It was again a long day for we finally got to bed around 1 am. after a really great day.

Next day, Monday, saw a fight to get our cases closed and secured - and back home to London after being taken to the station by Dave Spong of Sutton, Surrey - another of the many new friends I made on this trip with Priscilla. My patient husband met us at the London terminus - and we were home for a few days of badly-needed rest!

But the end of Priscilla's trip was in sight; she faced the formidable task of packing all she had acquired among other things! Nevertheless, records and video were far from neglected.

Came the Saturday, the special day for a Farewell party for Priscilla, and more ICC members were invited to help make the event - Pat O'Brien, Jenny Mills, Trevor Wagstaff, John and Jean Bignell, Wally Oldfield, Dave and Margaret Spong, Bob Newton as well as Ineke! Trevor also brought a couple of friends whose names I'm sorry to say, I cannot recall! A delightful feature was a large cake decorated in pale blue with a large motif of Bing piped on it, with the words HAPPY MEMORIES PRISCILLA! The whole thing was tied up in gold ribbon. My daughter, who happens to be a chef (!) was responsible for this as well as the rest of the catering and she did a wonderful job.

The highlight of this was a video-showing of the Gonsaga unveiling ceremony and tribute of which I am now the proud owner!

Sunday, 10th October brought Priscilla's day of departure. We left at 9am and our car was strangely quiet as far as conversation was concerned - and this made a marked change from the preceding couple of weeks. We were approaching the hour of departure for Priscilla and one couldn't help feeling great regret that the happy days we had together were ended - for the time being, at any rate for my main sentiment now is - COME AGAIN, PRISCILLA!

Editor: Breathless? Perhaps it goes to illustrate what is liable to happen to you should you become a Crosby-addict! We feel the Story of Rene and Priscilla was well worth telling for it covered so many areas - literally and metaphorically - of British Crosbyana. It will be obvious to all that Mrs. Chester spared no time, effort, or expense in entertaining this American representative of Crosbyana who herself has held - and holds - official position in the Crosby clubs of the States. And the story involved so many of our own members, too. It is safe to say that Priscilla Koernig returned home with a host of happy memories - as well as a few delightful surprises in what she had seen here. As for us - it was grand to meet her.

Must comment on the highly original present Renee received in the way of a record mounted on mahogany, suitably adorned, for use as a wall-clock. The title of the record will not have escaped your attention either. May give many of us ideas !

CROS-QUIZ

1. An unscheduled first question occasioned by a monumental error in DISCROSBY! What is it?

2. The Andrews Sisters made six Christmas-slanted records with Bing - Can you name four of them?

3. From which song-lyrics do the following couplets come?
   (a) Never treat others with scorn ....we're only here 'cos we're born...
   (b) Here I wait, do give me a chance, do tell me my fate - what is your answer?
   (c) And in despair I bowed my head - there is no peace on earth.I said...
   (d) Later on we'll conspire - as we dream by the fire.
   (e) Faithful friends who are dear to us - gather near to us once more...

4. Leaving aside small, independent, labels can you name five major labels on which Crosby albums have appeared in the last 5-6 years?

5. On which albums did Bing sing the following:
   (a) The Cockney rave-up KNEES UP MOTHER BROWN?
   (b) MACK THE KNIFE
   (c) IT'S ALL IN THE GAME
   (d) LET'S HARMONIZE.
   (e) NEVER ON SUNDAY.
   (Note: albums required, irrespective of any prior 'single' issues)

6. BING'S HOLLYWOOD (Brunswick) was a 15-abum set of film songs, numbered BING 1 to 15 incl. What was the sub-title of BING 15?

7. Turning to films, who was Christian Fourcade?

8. In which of his films did Bing sing:
   (a) SMILE RIGHT BACK AT THE SUN
   (b) COUNTRY STYLE
   (c) MY HEART IS A HOBO
   (d) AS LONG AS I'M DREAMING.

9. What was the first Bing film made in colour? Answer is slightly surprising!

10. Which film, supposedly set in Austria-Hungary, was actually shot in Canada's Jasper's National Park?

11. Name a major film in which Bing didn't sing a note!

12. What was Bing's 'name' in HIGH SOCIETY? (That's recent enough!)

13. In the 'old' 78rpm days Johnny Mercer, the celebrated songwriter, made four tracks with Bing. Can you name two of them? He also sang with Bing on THAT'S WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT but we refer to 78s.

14. Finally, a trick-question which you may not know: how many grooves are there on an average 78rpm record?

This is, of course, largely for amusement. No-one is going to get them all - Bing himself certainly wouldn't have! But mull over them before resorting to sleeves and books.

The answers appear further on in this issue.

And the best of luck!

Remember the most popular singer of all time

And meet some old friends along the way:

The Andrews Sisters
Connee Boswell
Maurice Chevalier
Rosemary Clooney
The Buddy Cole Trio
Nat 'King' Cole
Eddie Condon
Bob Crosby's Bobcats
Gary Crosby
Dixie Lee Crosby
Jimmy Dorsey and His Orchestra
Jimmy Durante
The Four Aces
Judy Garland
Jascha Heifetz
Eddie Heywood
Bob Hope
Burl Ives
Al Jolson
Peggy Lee
Mary Martin
The Mills Brothers
Russ Morgan and His Orchestra
Patti Page
Dick Powell
Bob Scobey's Frisco Jazz Band
Jimmy Stewart
John Scott Trotter and His Orchestra
Fran Warren

Bing on the radio!
Bing at the movies!
Bing with friends! Bing out West!
Bing on the Emerald Isle!

Moments to remember

Bing crooning *Learn to Croon...*

Bing and Hope gagging it up...

Bing and wife Dixie Lee: *A Fine Romance*

Bing and son Gary *On Moonlight Bay.*

Bing singing memorable duets with such superstars as Jimmy Durante and Judy Garland...

Bing singing lilting Latin tunes, rowdy Irish songs, languorous Hawaiian melodies, sagebrush ditties, a whole wonderful world of song!

The whole world loved him.

What was there *not* to like about Bing Crosby? He kidded our troubles away with a personality and a voice as relaxed as an old shoe. He gave us years of fun and laughs and wonderful songs. To quote author and music critic George T. Simon:

"I can think of no performer who has been so universally acclaimed and respected and loved."

And now Reader's Digest has collected the very best of Bing on records, on the air, on the silver screen—in this, our second Bing Crosby album. When Mr. Arland L. Smith of Bath, Maine, heard our first Crosby Collector's Edition album, he sent us a note:

"I've never heard Bing sing a song that I didn't like. By all means, get together another BING SINGS."

Presenting BING SINGS AGAIN, the most varied collection of Bing ever offered to music lovers—and not a single recording in it duplicates those in the first album.

Be our guest.

Listen to BING SINGS AGAIN—again and again and again. Audition it first for a no-risk home trial at our expense. And then keep it (if you love it) for a direct-by-mail price. See inside for all the old songs and big stars you get in BING SINGS AGAIN...

BING NEVER SOUNDED BETTER!

We electronically transformed the original recordings into 2-channel sound with stereophonic characteristics. The result is a music lover's dream come true—the best years of our lives, the best songs of our lives, the best singer of our lives.

Crosby on the Air

Memories come flooding back as you listen to these off-the-air takes from the old Crosby radio programs.

It's Only a Paper Moon
You Tell Me Your Dream *(with The Mills Brothers)*
On Top of Old Smoky *(with Burl Ives)*
For Me and My Gal *(with Judy Garland)*
Mississippi Mud *(with Fran Warren and Jimmy Stewart)*
The Song Is Ended
If I Knew You Were Comin' I'd've Baked a Cake *(with Bob Hope)*
Tell Me Why *(with The Four Aces)*
On Moonlight Bay *(with Gary Crosby)*
Louise and Mimi *(medley with Maurice Chevalier)*
May the Good Lord Bless and Keep You *(with The Andrews Sisters and Nat "King" Cole)*

El Bingo South of the Border

Enjoy a big-voiced Bing as he belts out these Latin evergreens.

You Belong to My Heart
Valencia
I Get Ideas *(with Rosemary Clooney)*
Siboney
Come to the Mardi Gras *(with Rosemary Clooney)*
El Rancho Grande

THE BEST SINGER OF OUR LIVES

Entertainer of the century.
Singer's singer, idol to more singers than anyone else.
A legend, an institution.
Der Bingle, El Bingo, Le Bing.
Beloved Groaner.

LESLIE GAYLOR — AS THE YEAR IS ENDING

LESLIE remains the eternally optimistic genial soul for he feels, despite his awful accident, that 1982 was a good year for him....the Crosby Room he described in the previous issue of BING was well-featured on regional television on October 14th and created a tremendous amount of interest.

Yes, despite everything, 1982 turned out a good year for me, especially in my various ways of keeping Bing's flag flying. The big development of the closing year was the realisation of a dream - my Crosby Room to my own design and certainly my own creation! I'm grateful to those members who have written expressing both their interest and their delight. Basically it is finished though I go on adding to it. For instance, just recently I have received three photographs from John Fisher, formerly producer of the Parkinson Show for BBC.TV. In sending them John wrote:

> Dear Leslie,
>
> I knew we had some photos of Bing somewhere in the office but it took some time to find them. Now that we have discovered them there is only one person that should have them and that is you. Without your help those many years ago we would never have secured Bing as a guest on the programme.
> I do trust all is well with you. Your Room sounds quite exciting.
>
> With every good wish,
> Yours sincerely,
> JOHN FISHER.

I have these to add to the eight coloured slides taken at the time of Bing's first Parkinson appearance and they make quite a show.

As many Southern members will know, to tie in with the fifth anniversary of Bing's death, both the BBC and ITV (TVS) featured my Bing Room in regional transmissions. There was tremendous viewer-reaction to the programme and I am the recipient of some very heavy mail - as if I hadn't enough! However, its all most pleasing. Local radio, too, especially Gerry Didymus on Radio Solent, featured my enterprise.

I live in a comparatively simple house and cannot put on show just everything I have - it would need a Carnegie Hall! I must say the TV crews were genuinely most enthusiastic - and kind. Certainly the Room took on a different look in the glare of those powerful TV lights.

One of the items on display is an American car-license plate with large black letters of "BING C" with a gold-coloured background. This was a gift from my good friend Judge Francis X. Smith of the Supreme Court of New York. As Francis reminded me when he wrote - Bing rode a bicycle on the Paramount lot with a similar number plate.

Anyway, to return to my Crosby Room, it has taken me eight months - and no less than £1,500 to bring it into being. Yet people still turn up and say "Oh, you don't have so-and-so, or so-and-so..." as if I ever boasted I had everything! The main thing is, this room is going to be a delight and a retreat for me (and visitors!) in the years to look forward to, especially of retirement which hasn't yet occurred!

I continually get enquiries from members as to the likelihood of any more of the CBS radio-recordings with Bing and Buddy Cole, augmented by Pete Moore additions. As Ken Barnes was associated with a further 24 unreleased tracks I wrote to him re. the prospects of another album. But Ken has replied that he now has little to do with record-production and is now into films - a medium he's always wanted to work in. However, he has not abandoned thoughts of a further album and even hinted at next April-May as a possible date! We can only hope this becomes a reality.

Ken did add that 14 songs from SONGS OF A LIFE-TIME are being considered for a boxed set by Readers Digest called THANKS FOR THE MEMORY. One disc to be devoted to Bing - hardly exciting news for us, I fear. Amd it seems that Phonogram have informed Ken Barnes that SONGS OF A LIFETIME is being released on a TV-sponsored album before the end of this year in Canada!

> I have also no news whatever of any possible releases of the Bing/Cole tracks in their <u>original</u> form. These are housed in Beakins Warehouse in Hollywood. It would be fine if some record company showed an interest for there are hundreds. Certainly lying where they are they do nothing for Bing's memory - which is something to think about for all those not enamoured of the up-dating of those that <u>have</u> appeared! e.g. by Ken Barnes/Pete Moore.

I am always being asked about early recordings Bing made with Paul Whiteman for the old American Victor Company in 1927-28. I have given this information many times. The correct prefix letters are either BVE, PBVE and on one or two occasions CVE. The "A" <u>single</u> letter as published by some Crosby collectors is merely a HMV Company prefix 'created' in Britain at the time.

I should like, also, to repeat that the following songs by Bing are from CBS radio tapes and released on record as such, e.g. THE LONGEST WALK, SUDDENLY THERE'S A VALLEY, MOMENTS TO REMEMBER, SOMETHING IN COMMON, THE NEXT TIME IT HAPPENS, THE FIRST SNOWFALL, IS CHRISTMAS ONLY A TREE, CHRISTMAS IS A'COMING, LOOK TO YOUR HEART, THE POSSIBILITY'S THERE, AROUND THE WORLD, LOVE IN A HOME and I HEARD THE BELLS ON CHRISTMAS DAY.

A number of people have requested from whence American Decca obtained these tracks; clearly there was some arrangement whereby they got them from CBS and saved studio recordings. I hope this information will suffice.

The All-American Collegiate Golf Organisation held their 18th annual dinner-dance on June 20 last and our good friend Mr. Justice Smith received an invitation. The event was held to honour among others young Nathaniel on his splendid golf achievement, and I was really delighted when Justice Smith sent me the seating-places of the guests for the event which was held at the New York Waldorf Astoria Hotel. There was something special about these seating lists for the Judge had had them autographed for me by Nathaniel, Harry, Kathryn and Bob Hope. Thanks to the judge I have another splendid personal memento - especially as I learned that Kathryn and the boys joined in a highly complimentary discussion on my own personal involvement with Bing.

I was very happy to meet Priscilla Koernig, of whose visit you have read elsewhere. Priscilla has been one of my contacts for quite some time and her standing as a Bing admirer is unparalleled. It was very nice to enjoy her company and also that of Renee Chester who ensured to the utmost that our American visitor enjoyed her stay in Britain. A couple of very nice ladies indeed.

Regarding the 'auction' I noted all the mixed reactions. Personally, I was pleased it took place and that people did have the opportunity of acquiring some of Bing's possessions, as Kathryn wished. Some people I also noted criticised Kathryn Crosby: I also learned, however, that after taking expert advice, Kathryn found it would cost at least a million dollars to set up a museum in memory of Bing. That this amount wouldn't have hurt her to ensure a lasting tribute to Bing is a point of view that has also been conveyed to me - and one I respect. But there it is, the world is made up of all sorts. The auction did take place and that is an end of it. In connection with it, however, Kathryn did send me four copies of the glossy catalogue that was produced by Butterfields.

Nice to note that the reissue of FANCY MEETING YOU HERE has had numerous radio plays and good comments from the radio presenters. This album has enjoyed tremendous success over many years and contrary to what was said in KEEPING TRACK last issue about the other album, TRAVELLIN' TWO-BEAT, it is by far the most popular album with the public. The duets are TWO-BEAT are sung very nicely indeed but the technical side doesn't match up to the FANCY MEETING YOU HERE album by a long shot. Although recorded in stereo there are many mono recordings of better sound quality but this is not to say the album is not listenable.

Kerr Barnes confirmed for me that TRAVELLIN' TWO-BEAT never enjoyed the same affection with the public as did its predecessor, FANCY MEETING YOU HERE.

I am often asked what is one of my favourite Bing 78s - and for what reason? One that comes readily to mind is Brunswick 01874 of which I have two copies - each different from the other! One comprises TWO CIGARETTES IN THE DARK/THE SWEETHEART WALTZ and this was the general issue. The other copy, however, has TWO CIGARETTES IN THE DARK - and THE MOON WAS YELLOW. It seems only a handful of these latter were pressed.

I would be most interested to know if any other members have this rare copy of Brunswick 01874, e.g. containing THE MOON WAS YELLOW.

Another subject on which I've had lots of requests concerns the book, THE GREATEST SHOW IN GOLF by Dwayne Netland. Sorry I can't help on this one. I have no spare copies. Bing gave me the only copy I have - autographed by him and thus another 'treasure'. If its any help it was published by Doubleday & Co., Inc., Garden City, New York, USA in 1975

Finally, I would like to wish the Editor and all members of the ICC a very Happy Christmas and the very best possible in 1983. I would like this certainly to include Stateside members among whom Judge Francis Smith and Leslie Wilson of California valiantly keep me in touch with events in America. My very best to all.

Editor: Very nice, too Leslie! Apart from which, I must confess that I am one of those who infinitely prefer TWO-BEAT TO FANCY MEETING YOU! I find themelodies more appealing - the fact that K. Barnes doesn't seem to like it rather confirms me in my view!

disCrosby

My goodness, how that voice of Bing gets me! And such a comment might easily provoke pained comments for, at this stage of the proceedings it must sound extraordinarily naive, if not stupid. Its elementary at least!

There's more to it, however. Consider, like so many others, I have been listening to Mr. Crosby for well over 50 years and truly can say that his voice has, virtually, been with me all my life. Yet, never, never, does that voice pall. Never do I feel: "I've heard that record too often; whatever magic it had has gone." That can so easily happen - with other singers. Today I can put an album on the turntable - or even a single - and at once the magic is there, undimmed, untarnished. Each time one can hear a nuance that has escaped us before - a particular piece of phrasing that delights the ear and makes one realise all over again: there was, and is, no-one like Bing. There never has been. There never will be.

After 50 years or so, year in, year out, it is so easily possible to say: My goodness - Bing sang that beautifully - as if one were hearing it for the first time! And mark you, I'm not one that wants to collect hundreds of pictures of Bing...I have no idea to amass a roomful of Crosbyana (tho' if I got down to it I probably do have that!)....I don't want all Bing's films on video. I don't want to know what he had for breakfast, as one rather cynical lady once observed when explaining she had no wish to join a Bing fan club. But that voice...speaking or singing! That comes into a different category.

One sees the record shops today full of what they proclaim as vintage material - The Wonderful Screaming 60's, Those Marvellous 50's etc. The Very Best of Who, What, When, - and Haircut! Yes, Haircut is the name of a group. As Fred Reynolds is apt to remark: All generations want their own heroes. We accept that and this is not just another knock at modern 'pop'. Merely putting things in perspective. One can, for example, play a 1931-32 record of Bing and the sheer artistry, the class if you like, is there. Always - and unerring.

A platonic lady-friend of mine asked me the other day to make up a tape of Bing favourites - her father-in-law was coming for a few weeks. He always declared there was "No one like Bing!" She said she had one or two modern albums but the old chap, while appreciating them, would much prefer the older favourites - and such a tape would go a long way to making his stay that much more enjoyable.

I knew what she meant.

It was no trouble to comply with her request; when I handed her the tape I said: "There's enough on there to convince you that Bing really is the greatest..." "You don't have to convince me," said my friend (much younger than I), "I think basically everyone knows he was - and is - the greatest." But there it is, I suppose we have to keep pace with the times and changing styles."

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Changing styles? Hmmmm....certainly, if they are for the better. But that 50 years I've referred to is eloquent proof there's going to be no-one to equal Bing, let alone better him. All of which, I readily concede, is elementary to those of our 'faith'. But, its not a bad thing to mull over it now and then!

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I think what really produced the foregoing was seeing Bing's album SONGS OF THE ISLANDS (MCA) in Woolworths the other day at £1.99 - or 3 for £5.00! My goodness, collectors have never had it so good, if we may paraphrase a politician's enduring phrase. A spin-off of the economic recession we are experiencing is that shops are desperate for what is now known as "cash-flow" - get some money in, even if we have to cut profits. So, it spreads to the record sections.

****

Never had it so good! Twenty priceless tracks - for £1.99..... Was there ever such value on offer before? Good luck to new collectors and may there be more such windfalls. There have been other Crosby Hawaiian albums, of course, but none really to equal this, if only for its quantity in a ten-title-a-side format.

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Bing clearly loved songs of this flavour; but then, if we listen to HOME ON THE RANGE he loved cowboy songs! Similarly, if we put on WHEN IRISH EYES ARE SMILING we are convinced those songs were his true love! And so it goes on. As for WHITE CHRISTMAS.....

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But there is something very special about Bing singing the songs of the South Seas. Certainly Bing made a point of recording a long list of such songs following the tremendous success of SWEET LEILANI. The songs themselves seem to lend themselves to the rich rolling deep-tones of Bing; and their sheer melodiousness is beyond compare. SWEET HAWAIIAN CHIMES, REMEMBER HAWAII, A SONG OF OLD HAWAII, HAWAIIAN PARADISE, ALOHA OE itself....Bing surely at his best, effortlessly perhaps naturally emphasising the telling phrase or word in the lyrics;

****

The album contains one or two odd-men-out though; this often crops up in an album-collection. Remember TOBERMORY BAY on the Irish album? The song is, of course, referring to Scotland! IN A LITTLE HULA HEAVEN, while extolling a Hawaiian paradise, isn't a pukka South Seas song but was written by the famous Robin-Rainger team for Bing's film WAIKIKI WEDDING. It is always worth hearing but on this album stars out as the inevitable sore thumb, especially with his accompaniment by Jimmy Dorsey and his Orchestra instead of the throbbing guitars mainly accompanying the bulk of the songs. MOON OF MANKOORA, tho' in keeping, is also a non-Hawaiian song.

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Glancing back idly on what I've said so far I was appalled at that stupid description - "a platonic lady - friend". It immediately suggests there are non-platonic varieties! Would have been easier in the first place to have said "a female acquaintance". How one can get into idiocy by trying to be concise. And I'M also wondering how I come to be talking about songs of Hawaii instead of JINGLE BELLS, GOOD KING WENCESLAS, and other more seasonable tracks? Perhaps its a good idea anyway in the gloom of December.

To resume the South Seas theme there is one notable exception in all the Hawaiian albums of Bing. Come to think of it, it is a notable exception, full stop. A lovely song, not truly Hawaiian, but given the full Hawaiian treatment - especially by Bing. And it must be one of the most obsure of Bing's recordings. Why,I cannot imagine. Consider the verse-lyric:

One night when the full moon was shining,
So bright there was hardly one star,
I strolled on a beach in Hawaii,
And thrilled to a distant guitar.
Then there in the moonlight they wandered,
Three maids by the waters so blue,
And a sweet melody they kept singing,
Now just listen and I'll sing it to you....

What are the next three words would be the question if this was a quiz. But they are JIM, JOHNNY AND JONAS, a song Bing recorded on 11th March, 1955 and one of the last 78s issued of him. Indeed, I'm inclined to believe it was the last, backed with FAREWELL. And it was made just as the John Scott Trotter marathon era ended, and Bing embarked on his recording activities with no one settled musical director. In this case, it was with Ken Darby and his Orchestra - not with his Singers or his Chorus as was the case with a string of Crosby recordings over the years.

It is a great recording - and so little known! Members write to me of all kinds of records that are not all that well known, e.g. THE FOUR WINDS & THE SEVEN SEAS, WHERE MY CARAVAN HAS RESTED, THINE ALONE, FOR LOVE ALONE and many others, nominating them as their own personal favourites. No-one, however, has ever even mentioned JIM, JOHNNY AND JONAS! It was issued here on a Brunswick 78rpm (05430), so it was 'available' for album compilation. But that has never occurred, and now, is not likely to. Which is a tremendous pity.

Although not explicitly stated one infers that the three maidens on the Hawaiian beach are desperately hoping for the return of three American G.I.'s, no doubt war-time or garrison veterans. The song or its arrangement has all the attributes of a good Hawaiian song.

The tragic demise of Grace Kelly quickly brought back the film HIGH SOCIETY to the TV screens. I found myself wondering - hoping perhaps - that such a quirk of fate might have even brought back TRUE LOVE to

the top of the Hit Parade where it reigned for so many weeks more than 25 years ago. Yes indeed, its 25 years.....but it seems its not to be.

The shewing of HIGH SOCIETY did, however, have one amusing sequel for me personally. It happened that the next day I visited a record shop (to pick up a record that had been ordered) and as I entered I was stopped in my tracks. The speakers, normally belting out some Heavy Metal (?) or New Wave pop monstrosity and making conversation difficult, were belting out Bing singing NOW YOU HAS JAZZ! This shop has a man one can talk to fairly reasonably, and a young lady to cater for the main clientele, no doubt. She is around 19, I would say, and wears red and green ringed woollen stockings, what is known these days as a rah-rah skirt (that is, about six inches shorter than the old-time mini), her hair is mauve one side, and green the other. Her one ear-ring looks like an oversize safety-pin - and her eye shadow is a dark, vicious-looking green.

If there is no-one else there and she happens to attend to you and you proffer a Bing album, her face assumes an expression of sympathy, as if to say "Poor old thing - look what he's chosen!" Of course, this may be my sensitive fancy. On this day she was the only one present and as I approached the counter I warmly congratulated her on playing a record that was worth listening to -- for a change. "Yeah, great ennit! Smashing -- saw HIGH SOCIETY last night on the box and found we had the record...smashing."

I agreed it was indeed smashing. Well, ennit? Indeed it is.

One of these days we should get down to analysing some of the arrangements John Scott Trotter did for Bing -- wrote and executed. As his association on record with Bing was so lengthy there has been a tendency to overlook John. Indeed, of recent years I've seen it written: Why didn't Bing use Nelson Riddle, or Henry Mancini or some other more-modern conductor? Which is unfair, if not a little ridiculous. JST concentrated on a good arrangement which always complemented Bing's singing and never sought to sidetrack attention from that prime objective.

But that by no means indicates that John Scott didn't provide some really splendid scores which more than warrant detailed analysis. It is clear that the orchestra he used was augmented as and when necessary. Trombones were always used most tastefully - and there are dozens of examples. But what really got me thinking about JST's sterling work over more than 20 years with Bing was listening to EMBRASSE-MOI BIEN again. Here the orchestra was clearly augmented in the string section for the middle chorus is as beautiful a piece of scoring for violins (and as beautifully executed!) as one could wish to hear. This was recorded in 1953 (the English version) and thus pre-dates Mantovani's celebrated CHARMAINE by five years. Yet it is precisely the sound that Mantovani later used with such tremendous effect and success. Listen again; you are bound to agree.

MISS P. M. WOODWARD, 109 High Street, Pershore, Worcs. WR10 1EQ offers copies of BING Nos. 56 to 65 incl. to anyone who wants them for the postage only.

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THE FOLLOWING APPEARED IN A MAGAZINE CALLED "RHYTHM" - the date is 1932!

BING CROSBY and the MILLS BROTHERS:
DINAH/CAN'T WE TALK IT OVER? Brunswick 1271

In this joint effort of DINAH we have the juxtaposition of the finest solo rhythm singer and the greatest vocal quartet and the result is, as you would expect, illuminating. Bing himself takes the first chorus, after which the Mills Bros. do their incredible stuff just once again. I must say that CAN'T WE TALK IT OVER? is a most taking tune and its interpretation by Bing Crosby has all that lazy sophistication which is so attractive in this artist.

Yes, May 1932 - and even your venerable Editor hadn't left school then! Very sedate in those days were the critics. But note that even then Bing was automatically described as the finest solo rhythm singer.....

And this particular coupling served to show that while Bing was the leading rhythm singer - CAN'T WE TALK IT OVER? showed him up as no mean balladeer!

ANSWERS TO THE CROS-QUIZ

SEE PAGE 27 (turn the page up!)

1. It was Paul Durand et son Grande Orchestra on EMBRASSE-MOI BIEN not John Scott Trotter. The remarks re JST still mainly apply however.
2. Jingle Bells/Santa Claus is Coming to Town/The Twelve Days of Christmas/Here Comes Santa Claus/Poppasanta Claus/Mele Kalikimaka
3. (a) LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR (b) MAY I? (c) I HEARD THE BELLS ON CHRISTMAS DAY (d) WINTER WONDERLAND (e) HAVE YOURSELF A MERRY LITTLE CHRISTMAS
4. Well, United Artists, Polydor, MCA., Decca, Decca London, Philips, Music for Pleasure (EMI), Pickwick, RCA., may be others!
5. (a) TRAVELLIN' TWO-BEAT (b) BING WITH A BEAT (c) HEY JUDE,HEY BING, (d) BING CROSBY SINGS (LAT8281) (e) HOLIDAY IN EUROPE.
6. ANYTHING GOES.
7. Jean, the LITTLE BOY LOST in that film.
8. WELCOME STRANGER.
9. DIXIE, in 1943
10. THE EMPEROR WALTZ.
11. STAGECOACH (1965)
12. C. K. Dexter Haven.
13. MR. GALLAGHER & MR. SHEAN/SMALL FRY/MR. MEADOWLARK/ON BEHALF OF THE VISITING FIREMEN.
14. One on each side; it is one continuous groove from beginning to end. Let's hope we have them right or life won't be worth living !

SMILES FROM "CALL ME LUCKY"*

*(Bing's autobiography)

Denny's easy-going. Everything rolls off his back without ruffling his feathers. He's an average student but there are times when it comes to ordinary everyday matters when he seems pretty vague...Horace Heidt, the bandleader, once gave me a clock and I said to Denny, "This is a four-hundred-day clock. It'll run for four hundred days without winding."

"Almost a year, hey," Denny replied. Freshman in college, too.

****

It is Johnny Burke who says that he has met at least a hundred and twenty taxi-drivers who claimed to have helped me out of the Coconut Grove when I was singing there and was "wobbly on my pins". He also claims that there's another large club of those who "saw a slightly tipsy Crosby fall through a drum". I run into scores of such "eye-witnesses myself. They are blood-cousins to the hundreds and hundreds of people who went to school with me.

****

One of the things I liked about my kids when they were younger was that they had fun standing outside of our house at Pebble Beach making disparaging comments about our dwelling when strangers passed. They said: "Wouldn't you think Crosby would have a better house!" or "They say the guy who lives there is a terrible tightwad."

And they told me afterwards, very happily, "Some of the strangers who heard us looked very interested, Dad."

****

I recall once when Gary was about fourteen, Dixie and I were up at Pebble Beach with him. We were asked to a formal dinner party. When I mentioned that Gary was with us the host said, "Bring him, too." So I let him use one of my black bow ties and fixed up a double-breated blue for him and along he went.
Dinner went smoothly enough and when the dessert was finished the ladies, as is the custom, arose to go into the drawing-room, leaving the men to their brandy and cigars. Gary watched this feminine exodus wonderingly, and then, turning to me, asked "What's the matter? Did somebody say something out of line?"

At another such party, when the butler asked son Denny if he'd like white wine or burgundy, Denny broke up the whole place by saying, "Hit me with a little burgey."

****

Another prop for my manly beauty was forced upon me in a 1935 movie called MISSISSIPPI. Its fairer to say that I forced it upon myself, for I'd let my weight creep up to one hundred and ninety pounds (13½ stone.) I was eating a lot and getting lots of sleep and it had been a long time between pictures, so I'd blown up to an unfashionable one-nine-o. MISSISSIPPI was a period picture - Civil War - and the pants I had to wear in it were so tight that my extra suet was conspicuous. As a result, I had to be strapped up, and I soon found out why women are so anxious to get out of their girdles.

****

TRADING POST

The market-place for your wants & disposals in Crosbyana; insertions are free though there is a nominal charge of £1.00 for non-Crosby items. We rely on the integrity of members and accept no responsibility for any transactions arising from this feature. It is up to members to satisfy themselves they are making a satisfactory deal. Keep entries to a maximum of 6 lines. Request SAE if lengthy lists of records are involved. And entries on a separate sheet of paper assist insertion.

CAR-STICKERS - circular, 3" dia in rich blue and gold with the well-known Bing motif and INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE around the circumference are available from BARRY THECKSTON, 13 Cunliffe Avenue, Ramsbottom, Lancs, BL0 9PY. Pop a £1 note or a cheque/PO into an envelope, enclose SAE - price 60p each or two for £1. These have proved very popular indeed.

BING ties in dark blue or maroon with the motif are available from THE BADGE CENTRE, 45 Ropergate, Pontefract, West Yorks, WF8 1JY - £2.80 post paid.

ARNOLD BAKER, 48 Groomsport Rd., Bangor, Co. Down, N. Ireland offers a wide selection of tapes, radio programmes US; ditto Australian, rare items, compilations on good quality C120 cassettes. Price £3.00 UK post paid. Open reel tapes also available. Send medium-sized SAE for catalogue of material available.

MRS. RENEE CHESTER, 48 Milton Rd., Hanwell, London, W7 is a great video enthusiast and has virtually all Bing's films on cassette which she is willing to share with members. Enquiries with SAE please.

BING-JUST FOR THE RECORD, the hardback book of all Bing's recordings in alphabetical and date order is approaching its second pressing. Meanwhile, the first remains available (just a few) at £3.00 post paid for the UK Write: JOHN JOYCE (BOOKBINDERS), Saltmeadows Rd., Gateshead, TYNE & WEAR, NE8 3AH. PLEASE NOTE: All remittances for this must be payable to JOHN JOYCE, ICC ACCOUNT. Overseas cost is: European £4.00 post paid; US/Canadian £4.00 surface mail, £6.00 airmail. Overseas members MUST remit in sterling.

THIS IS THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO BING'S FABULOUS RECORD CAREER AND NO MEMBERS CAN REALLY AFFORD TO BE WITHOUT IT, ESPECIALLY AT THE PRICE.

THE ALTERNATE BING CROSBY: by COLIN PUGH - a skilled analysis of varying takes of Bing's recordings, £2.50 - and PHILCO RADIO TIMES, by LIONEL FAIRPOINT, also £2.50 but BOTH for £4.50 post paid from the Secretary.

THE BING CROSBY LP-OGRAPHY £2.00 post paid and the MINI-DISCOGRAPHY (useful for marking and making notes rather than marking BING-JUST FOR THE RECORD, £2.00 post paid are both still available from the Secretary.

BOB BLYTHE, 47 Evelyn Aven., Kingsbury, London NW9 0JF has Bing and other 78s for sale. Callers or SAE for lists please.

Will members please note that the current address of PHIL CLARKE is c/o 57 James Copse Rd., Lovedean, Nr. Portsmouth, Hants. Phil runs the Southern Bing Crosby Society.

RAY DUNN, 1 Hazel Grove, Old Goole, Yorks, DN14 5UP wants recordings by STEVE CONWAY

R.S.(Bob) JONES, 39 Gladstone St., Hebburn, Tyne & Wear, NE31 2XD is always interested in Bing records for sale, especially the rarer types. All enquiries answered.

MARK BAKKER, 34 High St., Wick, Bristol BS15 5QJ asks if anyone can supply him with a taping of the interview Bing gave to the TONIGHT BBC programme the week previous to his death - in the Palladium, I believe. Also a taping of the ROBIN & THE 7 HOODS s/t - ideally I would like the LP but realise the difficulty of that.

KENNETH EDGE, 487 Hilton Lane, Worsley, Manchester (Phone 061-790-5210) wants the LPs RHYTHM ON THE RANGE and DRIFTING & DREAMING. Also tapings of MIGHTY LAK A ROSE/SWEETEST STORY EVER TOLD

MEMBERS CONTEMPLATING A VISIT TO THE STATES IN 1983 should contact member CLIVE ROBERTS, 60 THE GOFFS, EASTBOURNE, SUSSEX BN2121 1HE (phone 0323-639588). Clive organises STARLINE TOURS with a special interest in HOLLYWOOD and LASVEGAS. There are two next year starting April 7, 14 nights, and September 27 also 14 nights - the latter is in connection with the MOVIE BUFFS HOLLYWOOD CONVENTION. This will include quite a lot of Bing interest. Full details available on request.

DEREK COLLINGE, 41 Marsden Hall Rd., Nelson, Lancs, BB9 9PA offers: THE FABULOUS LIFE OF BING CROSBY by Geo. Carpozi, 75p each. The LP BING CROSBY RARE EARLY RECORDINGS BIOGRAPH BLP-C-13 £6.75; BING CROSBY FAVOURITE MELODIES, CHEVRON £2.00; HEY JUDE HEY BING LONDON SHU8391 £5.00.

PETER MURRAY, 5/5 Greendykes Dr., Edinburgh, EH16 4HL offers the following books: B.G. ON THE RECORD, hardback; THE ONE AND ONLY BING, paper-back; THE LOUIS ARMSTRONG STORY 1900-1971, paperback; Offers.

BARRY SANDERCOCK, 10 Captain Cook Close, Chalfont St. Giles, Bucks has for Sale: Hard-back CALL ME LUCKY (fair), and THE CROSBY: GREATEST SHOW IN GOLF by Duane Netland (new). Offers?

PADDY PATTERSON, 49 Shanard Avenue, Santry, Dublin 9, Ireland would be delighted to hear from other Irish members.

MRS. CLARE ROBBINS, 51 Wanner Hill Rd., Paignton, Devon, TQ3 3BT - phone 0803-556579 is not a member but writes that she has a number of Bing78's she wishes to give away. She cannot, however, pack them up and it must be someone to take delivery. A kind offer and we hope someone can take up the opportunity.

> ANY MEMBER WHO HAS LOST, BROKEN, OR MISLAID THEIR MEMBERSHIP TOKEN CAN HAVE A NEW ONE SIMPLY BY SENDING A STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE TO THE SECRETARY. AND, OF COURSE, THOSE WHO HAVE, BY AN OVERSIGHT, NEVER HAD ONE, HAVE THE SAME INVITATION.

JIM LOWE, 105 Renfrew Close, Strait Rd., East Ham, London, E6 4PQ requires BING mags Nos. 1, 7-10, 12, 14-16, 19-25, 27-29, 31 and 46 to complete collection. Also require any BINGANG and CROSBY COLLECTORS AND BING PICTORIAL Nos. 1-10.

JOHN UNWIN, 47 West Way, Broadstone, Dorset, writes: I've been amusing myself recording 9 C90 cassettes, most taken from 78s. Some haven't seen the light of day for years...Content is excellent, sound excellent, evenly spaced without clicks or chatter in between. Will supply at cost of tape and postage. Far-ranging, usually 30 records a cassette - write with SAE for details. (Editor: Having seen the lists, they comprise some fine collections of 78s).

RON HOLDER, 46 Croham Valley Rd., South Croydon, Surrey would like to be in touch with someone well-versed (and perhaps well-equipped) with Bing's radio shows please. (Editor:the following may fit the bill)

ALISTAIR AIREY, Flat 4c, 18 St. Philips Square, London, SW8 - is anyone interested in compiling and exchanging favourite Bing on tape - mixing shows, records, film excerpts, interviews?

JOHN JOYCE, 21 Birchfield Gardens, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear, NE9 7TJ is interested in acquiring all types of Crosbyana - especially, of course, records. LP's, EPS, or 78s - video, etc. etc.

TONY CARPENTER, The Captain's Table, 83-85 Lustrells Vale, Saltdean, Brighton, East Sussex, BN2 8FA: Can anyone oblige with a good quality taping (cassette) of WHERE MY CARAVAN HAS RESTED (Bing with Victor Young) and the reverse, LULLABY (Jocelyn)?

LES STREET, 8 Wyfan Place, Mynachdy, Cardiff, S. Glam also wants back nos of BING, e.g. 5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,19,21,22, 37 and 38 also any copies of CROSBY POST.

LEGEND MUSIC 153 FRANCKLYN GARDENS, EDGWARE, MIDD'X.

Tel: 01-958-4326

GOING HOLLYWOOD VOL. 17 is now available (see page 28, KEEPING TRACK previous issue of BING - £7.00 including post and packing. In addition to what was given in BING last time this album includes tracks from LET'S MAKE LOVE: HIGH TIME: ROBIN & THE 7 HOODS: RIPSTITCH THE TAILOR: CONFESSIONS OF A CO-ED.

MAGIC AWE 7: DARK MOON: incl. COME WHAT MAY, BLACKSMITH BLUES, PAWNSHOP ON THE CORNER: EVERYTHING I HAVE IS YOURS: GLOW-WORM: DARK MOON etc. £4.50+ P & P

ANTRON 9000: BING CROSBY & HIS SPECIAL GUESTS: incl. Tommy Dorsey, Ethel Merman, Theresa Brewer - SHANGHAI, LADY BE GOOD, BABY FACE, FRIENDLY MOUNTAINS, plus duets with Merman &c. £5.00 + P & P

MAGIC AWE 1	BING'S MAGIC: 16 great tracks (really good)	£2.75 + P & P
MAGIC AWE 3	BING & FRIENDS (also recommended)	£2.75 + P & P
MAGIC AWE 5	JOHNNY MERCER SCRAPBOOK(non-Bing)	£4.00 incl P & P
GRAP 1001	MUSIC, MUSIC, MUSIC all Bing, good.	£3.00 " "
PHILLIPS	SONGS OF A LIFETIME 2LP - 1 only -	£5.50 " "
PHILLIPS	COME RAIN OR COME SHINE - Bing	£5.00 " "
SUNBEAM 504	DISTINCTIVELY BING VOL 2 (early Bing)	£5.00 " "
SPOKANE 5	DER BINGLE VOL 1 1 only	£6.00 " "
SPOKANE 11	KRAFT MUSIC HALL Jan 29 1942 1 only	£6.00 " "
SPOKANE 10	DER BINGLE VOL 2 (1 only)	£6.00 " "
SPOKANE 17	KRAFT MUSIC HALL May 29, 1941	£6.00 " "
SPOKANE 20	DER BINGLE VOL 3	£5.50 " "
TOTEM 1009	BING, BOB & JUDY 2 1950 radio shows	£5.50 " "
TOTEM 1015	BING & AL VOL 4 1 only	£6.00 " "
AMALGAMATED	BING with Alice Faye & Betty Grable	£5.00 " "
"	BING with M. Chevalier & Groucho Marx	£5.00 " "
"	BING and Hopalong Cassidy	£5.00 " "
"	BING & DICK POWELL	£5.00 " "
"	BING, MARLNE DIETRICH, TALLULAH BANKHEAD	£5.00 " "
"	Rare early JUDY GARLAND (non Bing)	£3.00 " "

Other vintage recordings, soundtracks &c. write with SAE for lists, stating any particular requirements.

In the above listing, where the price is PLUS P & P add 80p per album.

MRS. MARY WHITAKER, 69 Fairfield Rd., Tadcaster, North Yorks, LS24 9SW has for sale 1 each spare copies of THE FABULOUS LIFE OF BING CROSBY (new paperback) and Bing's CALL ME LUCKY (hardback) or would exchange both for a good copy of the album TWILIGHT ON THE TRAIL.

Your Editor is always interested in albums of Latin-American (Spanish) vocal/guitar groups in the style of Los Paraguayos, Los Zafiros, Los Panchos, etc. etc. (Not changing interests - this is another branch!)

THE MAKING OF "GOING HOLLYWOOD"

Bing described at some length the making of this film of 1933 financed by William Randolph Hearst in an attempt to restore the dying popularity of Marion Davies. Bing wrote, in CALL ME LUCKY:

> "Along about this time Paramount needed a lion for a jungle picture so they traded me to MGM for Leo. Leo got real petulant and refused to report but I showed up at MGM and I got some great songs in a picture called GOING HOLLYWOOD!...the film failed in its purpose (regarding Marion Davies) but succeeded in putting Crosby into the top ten film stars.

The picture was made at an increasingly leisurely pace with Marion Davies herself playing the part - in real life! - of a super-duper star. Money appeared to be no object; indeed, Everett Crosby fixed it for Bing to get 2000 dollars a week, irrespective of how long the making took! Conferences, breaks, impromptu concerts and so on - with Marion strolling on whenever she felt like it - and a specially imported orchestra to play her favourite songs when she appeared! All this, of course, had nothing at all to do with the film!

Seems Marion Davies subsequently wrote a book, goodness knows when but it has only just come to our notice. It is entitled THE TIMES WE HAD - Life with William Randolph Hearst. In it, however, she had some nice things to say about Bing tho' we rather fancy some of them should be taken with a pinch of salt. For instance:

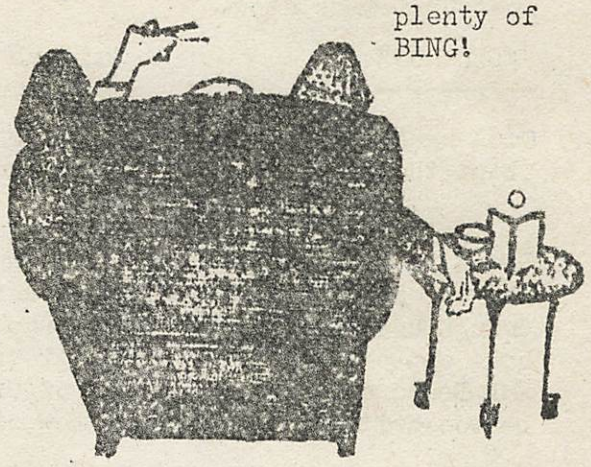
> "Bing Crosby was a very fine man to work with. He was always in a very happy mood and he paid attention to no one - he just paid attention to his work.
> What amazed me was that when he started to sing before the orchestra, he could sing perfectly fine with a pipe or cigarette in his mouth. With those enormous notes coming out it didn't seem to bother his throat a bit. He was very cute and very sweet, and he was crazy about his wife, Dixie. And she was a darling.
> We were making GOING HOLLYWOOD and Bing had been making pictures at Paramount. We borrowed him and on his first day I stayed off the set, which is the polite thing to do because when you're new at a studio, I know how nervous one can be and Bing didn't know me.
> But there was a certain star, JOAN CRAWFORD, who used to play Bing's records all the time on her set, and when she heard that he was working with us she came over and sat under the camera.
> Poor Bing couldn't do his scene and they finally had to ask her to leave the set. How could you do a scene with somebody staring at you with those big owl eyes?"

Coincidentally, of course, the splendid Joan Crawford was the posthumous victim of character-assassination in a book. But Bing had some tremendous songs in GOING HOLLYWOOD - TEMPTATION, WE'LL MAKE HAY WHILE THE SUN SHINES, OUR BIG LOVE SCENE, BEAUTIFUL GIRL and snippets of others.

BING track EVENTS

Record news and notes - by the Editor.

...just a dash of soda, but plenty of BING!



Well, there may be nothing on the record scene to have us jumping up and down in excitement but at least, thanks to Music for Pleasure, Bing's happy Christmas-countenance is well in evidence in the shops.

WHITE CHRISTMAS — BING CROSBY — MFP5590 Stereo £2.25p

Yes, Bing's famous Christmas album originally issued on Brunswick; later on MCA now makes its appearance on the celebrated budget label, MFP. As this label is probably the best-known, best-displayed, most easily available there can be little doubt that several more millions will have been added to its already astronomical sales by the time Christmas Eve is here. I've noted that piles of this album have been disappearing in our local Woolworths at considerable speed.

The titles - 12 of them of course - are too well-known to our members to need re-listing here. And I suppose that no self-respecting Crosby admirer doesn't have this album; probably had it for years and years in fact. This does, however, give us the chance to replace a well-worn album with a brilliantly reproduced new one. It has been electronically treated to give stereo effect and this will annoy some members who oppose this possibly 'phony' treatment. For me, it doesn't matter unduly - if you are say six feet from the speakers it hardly matters. Actually, the reproduction is first-class.

The sleeve-notes are pedestrian, quite predictable, and written by someone identified only by the initials J.E.M. One wonders just when these notes may have been written seeing that they proudly proclaim that WHITE CHRISTMAS has sold upward of eight million copies. He can say that again, as they say, for upwards in this case means about 22-million!

However, this is no time for nit-picking. Its good to see this album reissued - in its cheapest form ever, too.

There are several 'bits and pieces' to remark upon. Firstly, that RCA have issued a single:

BING/DAVID BOWIE — LITTLE DRUMMER BOY/PEACE ON EARTH. — Cat. No. BOW 12

Here again, nothing to make us catch our breath in joyful anticipation. It is difficult to believe there is a Bing admirer who is also an admirer of D. Bowie. Equally, its unlikely that a Bowie fan is an admirer of Bing - tho' this is a more likely combination. The songs are taken from the 1977 Christmas show which, sadly, we saw posthumously, by which we mean, in the

in the December of that year after Bing had recorded it earlier - just before he left for Spain. Although the single isn't to hand as we write we understand the sleeve is adorned with pictures of thetwo principals - and that the record will be TV-promoted, showing an excerpt from that last Christmas show.

"FEELINGS"	Various artists.	Decca TAB 48
		Price £3.99

Once again we have to observe there is little here for us to enthuse about though it contains two tracks by Bing:

AS TIME GOES BY NEVERTHELESS.

Decca seem determined to get as much mileage as possible as they can from the tracks Bing made fairly recently, well, we think 'recent' is a fair enough assessment. This is perhaps the third or fourth time these tracks have appeared. To be fair, since the MCA contract passed from Decca to EMI Decca doesn't have a lot of Crosby material to issue so we needn't be too critical. There are few of us, though, without these two tracks.

Several members have informed us of the issue by The Literary Guild Book Club. This is a 2-album set, priced at £7.98p incl. postage. One album contains carols &c. by choirs while the other has Christmas items by popular artists. THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS track is included in the latter, and this, too, was on the CHRISTMAS IS A'COMING album issued by MFP a couple of years back

> Additionally, however, the brochure proclaiming the issue also says that purchasers of the double album set will receive free a copy of Bing's WHITE CHRISTMAS - the biggest-selling record of all time. The brochure contains much laudatory comment on this single. Some members have ordered the set just in case this turns out to be a version that is new! The set, by the way, is entitled SOUNDS OF CHRISTMAS.

Two albums in the LEGEND MUSIC list (see p.41) are of considerable interest, e.g. GOING HOLLYWOOD VOL 17 which we've dealt with in the previous issue of BING (page 28) now available. The second is MAGIC AWE 7, entitled DARK MOON and including some little-known tracks such as - well see page 41 again. It looks a most attractive album tho' we have yet to hear it.

The national press is again carrying full-page advertisements for the 8-LP set REMEMBERING THE 40'S. We have mentioned this before. Its a READERS DIGEST offer - FREEPOST, LONDON , EC99 1AB; it costs £23.95p incld. delivery. Of the 128 songs contained in the set, no less than sixteen are by Bing - a fair proportion. And this 16 includes that little-known Bing track, THE FOUR WINDS & THE SEVEN SEAS. Although the Crosby records constitute a good-sized album in themselves, they are spread over the 8 alhums. In addition to the track mentioned, there are:

SAN ANTONIO ROSE	DON'T FENCE ME IN	GALWAY BAY
TRADE WINDS	ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE	NOW IS THE HOUR
SILENT NIGHT	I CAN'T BEGIN TO TELL YOU	CARELESS HANDS.
JINGLE BELLS	MCNAMARA'S BAND	
PISTOL PACKIN' MOMMA	S.A.TAKE IT AWAY	
SWINGING ON A STAR.	ALEX'S RAGTIME BAND	

The advertisements include a picture of Bing lighting his pipe. The other artists are all well-known and particularly associated with World War II, e.g. Vera Lynn, The Ink Spots, Anne Shelton, Glenn Miller, Flanagan & Allen, Perry Como, Billy Cotton, Vaughn Monroe, and many, many others. Personally, I would love a good clean copy of THE FOUR WINDS & THE SEVEN SEAS - but at a cost of £23.95p. Hmmm..... its certainly a nostalgic collection. One can almost hear the air-raid sirens!

BING LETTERS

JOY HAWKINGS, 18 Sturdon Rd., Ashton, Bristol: I felt I must tell you of how we thought about Bing on October 14th. I phoned my local RADIO BRISTOL with a request for Len (my husband) and Colin Pugh and all ICC members. The presenter, Lois Robinson, then got in touch with me and we decided on a full programme entitled A TRIBUTE TO BING CROSBY on the anniversary of his death instead of just a single request record. And it turned out very good. LADY OF SPAIN, WHITE CHRISTMAS, ROAD TO MOROCCO being some of the records played. Lois phoned Len and he spoke on the air about Bing, the ICC, our own small Crosby Room, which we call The Groaner's Room. It led to many enquiries about the Circle and suggestions of a get-together in this area. This we will try to arrange.

Incidentally, if anyone in our part of the country who would like to call in for a cup of tea, a chat, or a song (with Bing naturally) they would be most welcome. But, please phone first (Bristol 666372).

Editor: There's a nice invitation - and once again we notice how local radio people do seem to seize on the idea of a Bing programme, despite all our grumbles about radio! One can well imagine the delight in the Hawkings houseold. And keeping on radio:

KEN MERRY, 23 The Avenue, Bessacarr, Doncaster, S. Yorks: One continually gets new angles on how many lives have been touched by Bing Crosby. Star Choice on Radio 2, with such diverse people as Theresa Brewer and Ted Rogers, all seem to take the opportunity to eulogise about him. And on MY MUSIC (TV) Frank Muir was asked who first influenced his popular music taste on film and he answered: Bing Crosby. Denis Nordern, in an aside, said .."Not only the laconic style - but that marvellous voice."

Editor: Concerning the story THE SWEET LONG AGO in the last issue about the horrific bus crash which killed 6 people, including a long-time friend of mine, I am grateful to all those who wrote - indeed, I am touched. The sequel was that at the interest the verdicts were inevitably 'Accidental Death'. All the services, e.g. police, fire, ambulance crews were specially commended for the work they did in indescribable circumstances. The bus driver was fined £75 for driving without due care; it was said he was a broken man and will never drive ANY vehicle again. Some relatives protested at what seemed a mockery of a fine - but the magistrates asked: Does anyone really believe this broken man killed those people deliberately? It was stated he invariably drove single-deck buses and had no fixed route for this seaside excursion. The bridge itself, no longer used as the railway has ceased to run up the valley for many years, is finally to be demolished.

MALCOLM MACFARLANE, Manor Lodge, Clamp Gate Rd., Fishtoft, Boston, Lincs: I've had a gadget fixed to my cassette player to enable me to vary the speeds of cassettes. I have a lot of Bing material which runs slow and makes Bing sound like Paul Robeson. This gadget removes that problem and it is a joy to hear the songs at the correct speed. I should be pleased to re-record cassettes for any members who have similar problems - fast or slow.

Editor: This is indeed a useful facility for there are many tapes of historic material which, owing to continual dubbing, have steadily got slower or faster for various reasons. As Malcolm says, some tapes make Bing sound like Mr. Robeson while others produce Bing like a light tenor! Make your own arrangements with Malcolm re this good offer.

REG BRISTO,
7 Greenmeadow Close
CWMBRAN,
GWENT, NP44 4PJ

RON BOSLEY, 105 Polefield Rd., Prestwich, Manchester M25 5QN - will be well known to many members and after a lapse due to various reasons, he has just returned to the Circle. He sent us a lovely letter about a trip to the States and visiting the places of Crosby interest - as so many other members have done since 1977. However, it was the PS to his letter which really tickled us:

Reading through this letter I'm sure you must be tired of reading the same old letters from people, all telling you how many records and tapes and photos they own! I suppose its because we get so much pleasure from our collections. I know I keep mine locked up! My wife often says that if the house ever caught fire, she's not sure which my priorities would be - who or what would be rescued first!

Editor: I imagine a lot of wives ponder on this dilemma! Let's hope such a catastrophe, or the solving of the problem, never arises for the thought is horrifying. I know someone who has thought long and hard about a kind of safety-chute thro' which he could push all his records &c. in the event of fire... he never said whether or not he contemplated sending his wife down the chute also. He may have another idea.

Thanks for a nice thought Ron - but you are wrong on one aspect: we do not get tired of reading members' letters on their pride and joy tho' obviously, we cannot always use such a long recital. They are always read with interest however. And how members amuse themselves with their records. Thus:

TOM SHAW, 51 Venmore St., Everton, Liverpool 5: I decided I would make up a cassette to cover Bing from 1927-1977 - down thro' the decades with Bing. Its only when you attempt something like this you fully realise the permutations - and the choice! Mine went:
1920: MARY, LOVABLE, MY ANGELINE.
1930: JUST ONE MORE CHANCE: SWEET GEORGIA BROWN: DID YOU EVER SEE A DREAM WALKING?: MR. GALLAGHER & MR SHEAN: MEXICALI ROSE: GIRL OF MY DREAMS: SWEET POTATO PIPER.
1940: YOU ARE MY SUNSHINE: SAN ANTONIO ROSE: DOLORES: THINKING TONIGHT OF MY BLUE EYES: WHEN MY DREAMBOAT COMES HOME: FARAWAY PLACES: PUT IT THERE, PAL: HAVE I TOLD YOU LATELY?
1950: ISLE OF INNISFREE: IDA, SWEET AS APPLE CIDER: VIOLETS & VIOLINS: IN A LITTLE SPANISH TOWN: LET A SMILE BE YOUR UMBRELLA: TELL ME: YES SIR, THAT'S MY BABY.
1960: ROCKY MOUNTAIN MOON, CHINATOWN MY CHINATOWN: COME TO THE MARDI GRAS: LOVE MAKES THE WORLD GO ROUND: JEALOUS HEART: FOUR WALLS: HEY JUDE.
1970: PUT YOUR HAND IN THE HAND: SAILING DOWN CHESAPEAKE BAY: SEND IN THE CLOWNS: SUMMERWIND: THE NIGHT IS YOUNG: ONCE IN A WHILE: THAT'S WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT: ending with, of course, a young Bing singing WHERE THE BLUE OF THE NIGHT.

Editor: A mind-boggling task - but entertaining. How many such decade-lists would exclude LOVE IN BLOOM, JUNE IN JANUARY, HOME ON THE RANGE, MAY I, LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR, THINE ALONE, PENNIES FROM HEAVEN and so on? Mind you, members are attempting to put ALL Bing's records on tape in the exact chronological order! We can only wish them the best of luck.

TIM MORGURETH, 1906 Codd Aven., Balto, MD 21222, USA: Re. BING 65 and the Columbia/Brunswick situation, Jack Kapp was a recording manager for Brunswick, not its founder. He was frustrated at the way the company was being managed and struck out on his own with the Decca Corpn. His main concern was the cost of records. He felt home entertainment should be made more economically available. The first artists he was able to lure away were Bing Crosby, Guy Lombardo, and the Dorseys. His 35-cent records revolutionised the industry and Bluebird and later Okeh cropped up as competitors.
Brunswick was part of the American Record Corpn (ARC) as were its subsidiaries Vocalion, Perfect, Okeh &c. It continued as a separate entity until 1937-38 when it went bankrupt. At the time, bids were made to buy up the recording rights to various artists. Decca picked up the rights to some of the earlier Crosby's with Columbia getting the lion's share...

Editor: Hope this helps. Me? I'm dizzy. But is <u>British</u> Columbia (absorbed into EMI Since) the same as <u>American</u> Columbia?

DAVE SMITH, 31 Whitecroft Rd., West Moor, Newcastle-upon-Tyne:

I noticed with great interest that item 1334 in the huge disposal of Bing's memorabilia (last issue) - 'Photograph of Bing, the folder cover signed by Deborah Kerr and Peter Toole' - was a photo which I sent to Bing after his Pasadena accident. The photo included a shot of Bing and myself at St. Andrews and for good measure was autographed by Humphrey Lyttleton and George Chisholm. (Perhaps they couldn't decipher them!) and the good wishes of the ICC. I wonder where it is now?

Editor: Well, at least Bing had it and no doubt appreciated it when he was alive. Other members noted items they had sent Bing in past years. Inevitable, no doubt, in such a clear out.

ALASTAIR AIREY, 4c St. Philips Sq., London, S.W.8: I have just returned again from New Zealand. Most interesting and pleasant that the national radio station usually put on a Bing record after the news at about 8.00 Nice start to the day.

G.W.HILL, 2 Hazeldene Ave., Hartburn Stockton on Tees: Re. Editorial in previous issue and the vicious tales that attempt to cast doubts on Bing's memory, for me the operative word is "private". There are two sides to every story. We'll never know Bing's to these posthumous denigrations but we know enough of him to ignore them. Put on our favourite records and in seconds we will say who cares about his private life (which for me was exemplary) - and say all over again: What a great record!

Editor: Hear, Hear sir.

BILL DREWELL, 13 Welton Rd., Daventry, N'hants: I like the quote (page 2 last issue) of Bing's about old songs having a sentimental association. Certainly true for me. I remember back in 1939 when I was courting my wife we used to go regularly to a cafe in Camden Town, London and on the old juke-box they had Bing's MEXICALI ROSE. I would put my coin in as soon as we walked in. It got that when the owners saw us coming they put this song on for us. And my wife still has those 'big brown eyes' - and I still sing along with it!

Editor: Lovely!

JOHN NORRIS WOOD, The Brook, Dewhurst Lane, Wadhurst, S'x: I think malicious lies about deceased people should bear the same penalties from the law. Bing's kindness to us - a great friend and myself - when we accosted him on the street in Paris was at variance with much of the rubbish written recently. Though I did think him as being much more serious and introspective than I had expected. It must have been a very difficult and painful time for him in Paris in 1952 - staying at the Ritz and filming LITTLE BOY LOST.

We were a couple of scruffy students and I think it amazing that he should have spared us so much time, inviting us to his rooms in the hotel, etc. There was absolutely nothing in it for him and it was a tremendous act of sheer kindness to talk to us in the way he did.

ALAN PARKER, 10 Heath Park Ave. Skircoat Rd., Halifax, W. Yorks: The song YOU'RE THE ONLY STAR IN MY BLUE HEAVEN is not listed in BING-JUST FOR THE RECORD or any other discography but I am convinced I heard it sung regularly in the late 30's and early 40's. The memory is so fresh I can recall the lyric quite accurately and the only place I had access to Bing's records was in the home of a now-deceased friend who had an upright radiogram - 19gns. at 10/- a week. I may have heard it on the wireless and it must have been a record programme. Ergo, there MUST be a record of it. I must admit that the songs is also absent from the Brunswick catalogues up to 1952.....I dould hardly concentrate on HIGH SOCIETY on TV last night thinking of 'You're the guiding light that brightens up the night, 'til you came in sight my heart was lonely...'

Editor: Mystery all right. Trick of memory...Bing did not record this song commercially. It did appear on a private 7" LP - but fairly recently! And with a very limited circulation. Dick Todd recorded it at its time of issue - and that may be the answer!

BILL McDOWELL, 33 Ballycreen Dr. Lisburn, Co. Antrim: Members' first awareness of Bing? My clear-cut first

of the Maestro was a song he didn't record. I was about 10-years-old at the time and it seemed to me to be always on, probably a trick of the mind but it seemed to be when we were waiting to go to the match on Saturday afternoons. The song was OL' FAITHFUL so they must have been playing the radio show recording...I didn't know one singer from another then but my father told me who it was being a great Bing-man himself.... Another song I was SURE Bing had recorded until I got the discography was SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY, a song I always liked and thought tailor-made for Bing...

Editor: These chaps are beginning to make me doubt my own memories! True Bill McDowell says he couldn't tell one singer from another at the time, tho' he claims his Dad could. Well, Bing did NOT (once again!) record OL' FAITHFUL - and I must say - tho' he didn't specify the period - that it is most unlikely that the song from the radio show was broadcast. That Bing had sung it on the radio (the song was a fantastic hit here at least) was known and dubbings of it were scarce and valued. It did surface on record, as it were, on The Avenue BING'S SPECIALE but that was (in terms of years) fairly recent. We've never heard Bing do SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY, either on record or radio - tho' that doesn't mean he didn't. So, what's happening to these 'memories'? Bill had another query which leaves me just as baffled:

This is just a small selection of letters received - thanks tho' for those not included. It is a sad fact that some letters have to be put aside - simply because they cannot be fully deciphered! Please take care - especially with addresses! In particular, those from overseas.

He says: Bert Bishop had in his collection a Masonic Programme. Do you know of such a programme yourself? A programme that Bing appeared in?

To which the answer is: No, I don't! Perhaps Bert will enlighten us.

FILM WEEKLY of February 19, 1938 contained the following, you may be interested to know:

> THE BING CROSBY FRIENDSHIP CLUB will welcome new members. Enquiries should be addressed to the President, MR. TED MOLE, at 47 Craven Gardens, Barkingside, Ilford, Essex.

We know the name of Mr. Mole - is he still around, we wonder? We don't want to try the address - 45 years on!

ALF WARD, 5 Warwick St., Crookes, Sheffield wrote an indignant letter about the economic situation (with which we fully agree) and lamenting that that one-time hive of industry is rapidly becoming a ghost-town. He is particularly incensed, too, at the poundage on Postal Orders - and says: I suggest you put the subs up to £3; those who pay by PO could send £1 notes and to hell with the poundage! Others have mentioned this so anyone who normally pays by PO are welcome to adopt the idea. Its up to them.

HARRY FULMER, 201 Kings Row Apts., Lindenwold, NJ., 08021, USA clearly has one of the largest collections in the world. Even so, he writes: I am still after a lot of the Cremo, Chesterfield, Woodbury and the early Dorsey period of the KMH. Of the later Kraft I still require vocal details of the shows:
12.2.42; 19.2.42; 14.5.42; 22.4.43 29.4.43; and many others of 1943. Perhaps if anyone has them? And I am still after the following: "B" takes of HERE LIES LOVE, JUST AN ECHO, MOONSTRUCK, LET'S PUT OUT THE LIGHTS, "A" take of SAIL ALONG SILVERY MOON and "B" of GOLDMINE IN THE SKY. If anyone is interested I still have "B" unissued takes of YOURE GETTING TO BE A HABIT WITH ME and MAY I? for sale - Columbia did these for me some years back. I wonder, too, if anyone has the songs from the film JUST AN ECHO?

Editor: This is one for the discographers!

(cont. over..

But it would be less than honest to think that Harry is going to get what he wants! If there is one document, or publication, we would all like it is a Kraft Music Hall directory. We know of none, or even of one being attempted. It would be a voluminous effort bearing in mind KMH lasted 10 years and included as 'guests' almost everyone who was anyone in show business. Much survives, miraculously, on well-worn tapes &c. It could be described, possibly, as Bing's true radio memorial or monument, figuratively speaking. No other stint was as lengthy as the KMH - and mark you, it contained the best 10 years of Bing's incredible voice. So many songs from it have appeared - songs that Bing never recorded commercially and always the voice is magnificent. We do have members who possess incredible amounts of this KMH material, however, so one never knows.

Regarding the film Harry Fulmer mentions, this too is rather obscure. It was made in 1933 and released in 1934 and, according to THE ROAD TO HOLLYWOOD, contained the title song, GOING GOING GONE, PLAY FIDDLE PLAY, YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL TONIGHT, MY DEAR and TWO TICKETS TO GEORGIA, presumably but not definitely all sung by Bing. It came in between THE BIG BROADCAST OF 1932 and COLLEGE HUMOR, one of several shorts made for Paramount. Bing recorded JUST AN ECHO and YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL TONIGHT but the others do not appear on record.

AT THE AUCTION - a first hand account.

BY LESLIE WILSON (Pleaston, California)

I attended the fourth day on Friday May 30th with my youngest son, Michael. When we arrived at Butterfields at 8.30am there was already a crowd waiting to get in - it was due to start at 10am. But Kathryn had an informal get-together in an adjoining room to receive fans and others wanting to meet her. Minute Maid orange juice, coffee and sweet rolls were served to this gathering.

Although I had met Mrs. Crosby in Spokane at the statue unveiling, Priscilla Koernig re-introduced me since she and I had worked on the cataloguing and evaluation of Bing's records and tapes for the auction. Kathryn was most gracious and we had a good chat tho' brief.

> We also had the pleasure of meeting Gary Crosby and his wife Barbara.
> GARY REMINDS ME VERY STRONGLY OF HIS DAD. EVEN MORE SO SINCE HE HAS GOTTEN OLDER WITH MANY OF BING'S MANNERISMS AND RELAXED ATTITUDE.

He was the only other Crosby family member present on this day although I understand that Bing's sister, Mary Rose Pool, had been present at the first three days. Special seats had been reserved at the front for some of Bing's special fans. These included Priscilla, Pat Sullivan, Hubie and Cathie Wilson, Lanny and Ann Gunn, Ted and Eleanor Kasper, Graham Reade, Larry Kiner and myself.

All the items for auction were on display on a lower floor. Kathryn was constantly interviewed by all the various TV networks before proceedings started and many of the fans, too, were interviewed as to why they were there.

As the items were put up, they were projected on a slide viewer - some organisation! But I quickly got the impression that the average fan didn't have much of a chance to get something special as most things went for quite high prices. I felt the people bidding - and getting - the lots weren't really fans but just wanted something of Bing's and didn't care how much they paid for it. Possibly for later re-sale?

A very nice buffet-lunch was served consisting of ham, pineapple, strawberries &c. Subsequently, the sale went on right until 7 pm and things left unsold would be offered at a later date.

All in all, it was an exciting event that I wouldn't have missed for worlds!

LESLIE GAYLOR is a genial soul but most regretfully he finds himself in a position that is causing him inconvenience and trouble. He is so well known as a Crosby celebrity that people are turning up unannounced at his home; he gets home from work tired, waiting for his meal, waiting for a bath - to find people more or less camped on the doorstep. They even park themselves on neighbours awaiting his return! One turned up in such a way saying he had 4 hours to wait for the ferry so thought he would spend it with Les. Now Leslie appreciate people meeting him - but a line has to be drawn, as must be obvious, Seems most of these people are NOT Circle members but if at least our members drop Les a line first it would be most helpful.

MICHAEL SOLOMON, 4 St. Michaels Aven., Hemel Hempstead, Herts (phone (0442-) 65302 has around 100 Bing LPs for sale,a pretty comprehensive list including ROAD TO HONG KONG, and the independent labels. No prices mentioned.

MR. P.X.SOARES, 96 Norfolk Rd., Seven Kings, Ilford, Essex wants: BRUNS LA8585 AULD LANG SYNE; LA8656 WAY BACK HOME; also Decca DL5298 BC. SINGS THE SONG HITS; DL5299 FAVORITE HAWAIIAN SONGS Vol 2; DL8374 SOME FIND OLD CHESTNUTS; LEGEND WM1973 FRANCES ETHEL GUMM-H.L.CROSBY; US Star Tone ST225 BING AND MARY. (These have been taken from the LP-ography and the Decca are, of course, the US issues. In some cases equivalents are available - or were - here. Most of the Hawaiian songs, for instance, appear on SONGS OF THE ISLANDS, now in Woolworths at £1.99.

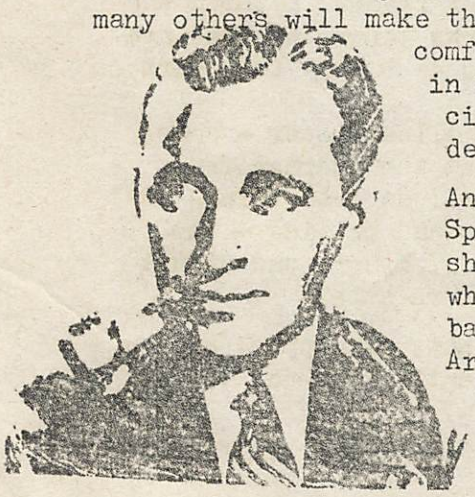
The last two pages of this issue resume the GENERAL ELECTRIC RADIO programmes to be detached, if you so desire, and added to those already with you - making this a larger-than-normal issue!

CHRISTMAS IS A'COMING! - FAST!

Indeed it is almost upon us; a glance at the calendar shows that, with Christmas Day and Boxing Day coming on Saturday and Sunday this year's junkettings will be a minimum of 4-days duration. Junketting? Undoubtedly for many..... but the members of the Circle being a rich slice of an average segment of humanity will not all find it so. For the lonely, not surrounded by loving family, four days may seem interminable...for those who have no job from which they will be taking a holiday; no job to which they can return, the holiday will be fraught with anxieties. For those afflicted, those in hospital, or up against it in various ways let us - without being maudlin - spare a thought. Christmas, that so unique of holidays, uncomfortably highlights the plight of a lot of people - members. Mail vividly tells us that.

This year Christmas is, must be, a lot different for a lot of people, alas.

It remains to be seen what TV - a tiny antidote perhaps to loneliness - will offer us in the way of Crosby entertainment. The advent of video for so many others will make them independent of BBC/ITV. The warm, friendly, comforting voice of Bing will - as ever - play its part in making Christmas tolerable even we pray in difficult circumstances. For others it will be the continuing delight



And if Christmas comes (as surely it does!) - can Spring be far behind? Alas, yes, it can. Experience shows that it is a long haul from Yuletide to the time when we can reasonably hope to feel the sun on our backs, and the air benign with the softness of Spring. Are we gloomy? Of course not - to all our members we wish the very Christmas they want. Come what may, it remains - CHRISTMAS! Best wishes to all !

HAPPY DAYS!